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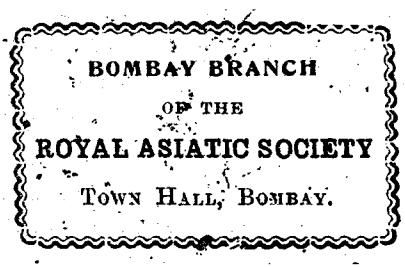

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LIVES

OF

BRITISH STATESMEN.

By JOHN MACDIARMID, Esq.

AUTHOR OF AN INQUIRY INTO THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL DEFENCE IN GREAT BRITAIN, AND OF AN INQUIRY INTO THE PRINCIPLES OF SUBORDINATION.

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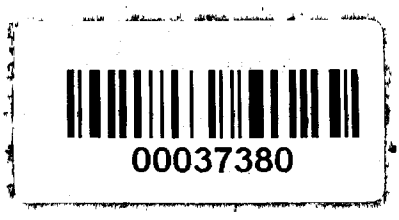
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PREFACE.

Of the men who have guided the councils of our country, and attained distinguished political eminence, we are desirous to learn many particulars, which would be misplaced in the general annals of a nation. The historian may seize the prominent features of their character, and describe the most important of their public transactions: but numerous anecdotes, both of their public and private life, however interesting, he must leave unrecorded, while a whole people demand his attention. We are solicitous to know the steps by which they ascended to power, the qualities by which they retained their station, the incidents by which they terminated their exalted career. We are pleased to

observe them in the more private intercourse of life; to follow them into their families and closets; and to discover how the men, who govern empires, conduct themselves amidst the cares and duties which are common to the humble and the exalted.

Nor is our curiosity alone interested by such information. To those who prepare to tread the same paths, and to gratify their ambition in the discharge of public functions, the progress and transactions of their illustrious predecessors must be the volume in which they are to read the most important lessons. But it is not the statesman alone who is called on to observe the results of political experience: in this country, where public opinion is possessed of so much sway, the voice even of private individuals may have some influence on the national councils.

The moral lessons afforded by the career of statesmen demand not less attention. Every one is interested to learn, from such eminent examples, that the lustre of the highest station is derived from the same virtues as those which embellish pri-

vate life; and that happiness is most attainable, as well as most secure, when our condition excites not the jealous passions of mankind.

Such are the views which have guided the Author in delineating the Lives of British Statesmen. He has been anxious to derive his information from the most authentic sources; and to point out virtues and defects equally without exaggeration or diminution. He has avoided many opportunities of discussion, where the result did not seem of importance to his immediate object; but he has occasionally attempted, in the illustration of his subject, to throw light on some obscure or disputed parts of history. He has endeavoured to select the Lives from periods sufficiently distinct to prevent a repetition of the same political transactions; yet sufficiently connected, to form a chain of history without considerable interruptions.

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Freeman sc.

Sir Thomas More

LIVES

OF

BRITISH STATESMEN.

SIR THOMAS MORE.

TOWARDS the close of the fifteenth century, those contests for the sovereignty, which had so long distracted England, and obstructed her improvement, were, by the union of the rival families, brought at length to a termination. The marriage of Henry VII. with Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward, did not, indeed, produce that complete and cordial harmony between all parties, which might have been expected. That monarch, haughty, selfish, and intensely jealous of his authority, still recollected that, as heir to the house of Lancaster, he held the throne by a very doubtful claim; and strove, by treating his wife with neglect, and the partisans of her family with harshness, to efface from the public mind the impression of her superior title. He

ruled thus rather as the head of a party than as the common sovereign of his people; yet any open discontents, to which this perverse policy gave rise, were quickly subdued by his sagacity and vigour. On the slightest appearance of insurrection, he was ever ready to march out against his enemies; and if he delayed, on the first opportunity, to give them battle, it was only when he found that his conquest would be rendered more easy by their increasing straits and ripening dissensions. Under this vigorous administration England began to enjoy a tranquillity which it had long been a stranger: and although the people suffered grievously from the oppressive exactions of their monarch, yet, as all disturbers of the public peace were quickly and severely punished, the internal intercourse of the kingdom became less interrupted; and industry, as usual, increased with the security of person and property.

Various circumstances occurred, during the course of this reign, to turn the activity of mankind from bloodshed and devastation, to pursuits more interesting and generous. The continental monarchs also had succeeded in extending their authority over all classes of their subjects, and in establishing governments, which, although rude and arbitrary, were far preferable to the turbulent anarchy of the feudal institutions. Their subjects, thus prevented from expending their energy in

mutual destruction, began to turn their attention to pursuits compatible with good order and regular government. Excited by the success of the Hanse towns and the Italian republics, which had hitherto acted as the carriers of Europe, and acquired vast wealth by their traffic, the other maritime nations began eagerly to aspire after a portion of these advantages; and our countrymen, though at first retarded by the want of capital and skill, became initiated in that maritime trade for which nature has so remarkably adapted our situation. The progress of commerce, the improvement of agriculture, and the introduction of manufactures, were indeed slow and interrupted; yet they habituated the people to the occupations of peace, and taught them to look for gratification in arts hitherto unknown. The more restless spirits felt no relish for tranquil pursuits, or their eagerness could not wait the slow returns of industry, soon found ample room for their exertions without disturbing the public peace, when the enterprises of the Portuguese and Spaniards, aided by the recent discovery of the compass, opened a vast field to adventurers in the East Indies and America.

At this period, when the human mind, awakened from the long slumber of the dark ages, began to exert extraordinary activity, a portion of the more affluent classes directed their attention to the pursuits which adorn, while they improve mankind.

Literature, which had already made considerable progress in Italy, began to be eagerly prosecuted throughout Europe; and England soon promised to rival her more enlightened neighbours. It is from this era that individuals, as well as society in general, become interesting, owing, not more to the greater diversity and importance of their pursuits, than to the more complete and authentic records, in which, from the progress of literature, aided by the discovery of printing, their characters and transactions are preserved. Of the most important events in the preceding part of English history, and of the characters even of her monarchs, posterity has received only a faint outline, which succeeding historians, from their conjectures, or from traditions scarcely more authentic, have endeavoured to complete and embellish. But from the age of Henry VIII. we are furnished with such authentic materials even of individual statesmen, as enable us, without transgressing the known bounds of truth, to give satisfactory views, not only of their more prominent transactions, but of their manners, their opinions, and the motives which guided their conduct.

Birth and parentage.

Among the statesmen who appeared at this remarkable period, Thomas More, from his talents, his acquirements, and the affecting vicissitudes of his fortune, most strongly attracted the attention of his contemporaries. He was born in Milk Street,

London, in 1480, five years before the accession of Henry VII. to the throne. His father, Sir John More, one of the Judges of the Court of King's Bench, a man of acute wit and sound understanding, took due precautions that the early indications of genius in his son should not languish for want of cultivation. In the first rudiments of education he was instructed at a free grammar-school in Threadneedle Street, a seminary of considerable eminence, but affording means of improvement very unequal to what, in the present times, may be procured at a grammar-school of reputation. The elements of the Latin language were taught, but the pupils, instead of forming an acquaintance with the elegant authors of Rome, had in their hands only the dull and barbarous treatises of the schoolmen; and while their taste was thus early depraved, that superstition which held the place of religion, and that sophistry which usurped the name of knowledge, clouded their imaginations, and perverted their understandings. A more elegant literature had dawned on the Continent, but its first rays had as yet scarcely reached England. Education.

As a further step in his education, More was afterwards placed in the family of Cardinal Morton. In consequence of the form into which society was thrown by the feudal institutions, the only road by which men of inferior rank could hope to reach distinction, was the favour of the great proprietors with Cardinal Morton.

in land, the chief ecclesiastics, and the principal officers of state. In their families, also, the politeness, elegance, and knowledge of the age were to be found: for while there was no middle rank of respectability, and the bulk of the community laboured under poverty and ignorance, the patronage of the great was necessarily courted by men of learning, as their only resource; and distinguished scholars had a ready access to the tables of persons of condition, at a period when the possession of learning was so rare. At the same time, the internal economy of a great man's family, resembling, on a smaller scale, that of the monarch, was the proper school for acquiring the manners most conducive to success at court. Persons of good condition were consequently eager to place their sons in the families of the great, as the surest road to fortune. In this station, it was not accounted degrading to submit even to menial offices; while the greatest barons of the realm were proud to officiate as stewards, cupbearers, carvers to the monarch, a youth of good family could wait at the table, or carry the train of a man of high condition, without any loss of dignity. The patronage of the great man being naturally secured to those who had acted as his inmates and retainers, admission into the families of the principal officers of state, who had preferment most directly in their power, was particularly courted. All these advantages were hap-

pily united in the situation of More, since his patron, who held the rank of cardinal in the church, was at once primate, chancellor, and the confidential minister of the king.

More soon attracted particular notice among the Cardinal's retinue, not more by the gracefulness of his person and address, than by his ready flow of wit and the perpetual sprightliness of his temper. At this early age he was accustomed, we are told, to step in among the players who acted, during holidays, at the Cardinal's palace; and undertaking, without any previous study, a part imagined by himself, to support it with a liveliness and ingenuity which excited the admiration of the hearers.* In that age plays were neither composed nor acted in the regular manner which a more refined taste has since introduced: they consisted chiefly of such contests of wit and drollery, as we occasionally meet with in Shakespeare; and the player was more frequently employed in sporting his own humour, than in reciting the words of an author. But these entertainments, if rude and barbarous when compared with the regular drama, were better calculated to sharpen the wit of the performers, and give them a peculiar readiness of humour. On More, the share which he took in them seems

* More's Life, by his son-in-law, William Roper, edited by Thomas Hearne, 1716, p. 3.

to have had effects both striking and permanent; for in readiness of reply, and in the extraordinary facility of his expression, whether conversing or haranguing, he was accounted superior to all his contemporaries.

The Cardinal, a man of an acute and penetrating mind, charmed with the vivacity and promptitude of More, solicitously pointed him out to the nobility who frequented his house, as a boy of extraordinary promise. "This child here waiting at table," he would say, "whosoever shall live to see it, will prove a marvellous man." * Such prophecies from a man of Morton's rank and experience, as they could not fail to produce a strong impression on More, probably contributed to stimulate those exertions by which they were realized. The person, the wisdom, the talents, and worth of the Cardinal, through life a favourite topic with his ward, are thus introduced in his principal performance: "He was a man not more venerable for the high dignities which he held, than for his wisdom and virtue. His person, of the middling size, still retained its vigour to a late old age: his countenance excited rather reverence than awe; and although grave in his demeanour, he was never difficult of access. To discover what presence of mind was possessed by those who solicited his pa-

* Roper's Life of More, p. 3.

tronage, he was accustomed to give them a harsh and repulsive, yet not insulting, reception; and such as, without petulance, gave indications of a ready wit and firm temper, he delighted to promote, as men of kindred minds to his own. To a polished and energetic eloquence, he joined great knowledge in the laws, uncommon genius, and a memory which, naturally strong, and cultivated with indefatigable diligence, had become altogether extraordinary. Having, at a very early age, been transferred from school to court, employed, from that time forward, in the most important affairs, and perpetually subjected to the vicissitudes of fortune, his wisdom and experience, acquired amidst many and great dangers, was relied on with implicit confidence by his sovereign, and entrusted with the chief direction of the government." * Listening daily to the conversation, and observing the conduct of such a personage, More naturally acquired more extensive views of men and things than any other course of education could, in that backward age, have supplied. †

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* Utopia, p. 60. edit. Oxon. 1663.

† Previous to the ready and general access to information, which the art of printing, by multiplying the copies of books, has afforded, the chief means which the young could employ to accelerate their progress in the acquisition of knowledge was by attaching themselves to some wise and learned man, and listening with diligence to his discourses and conversation. Such was the method of

1497. At Oxford; At the age of seventeen, being sent, at the instance of his zealous patron, the Cardinal,* to Oxford, where a better taste in literature had lately been introduced, he had there the advantage of attending the lectures on Greek and Latin of Grocyn and Linacre, two eminent scholars. Captivated with these studies, which opened to his view such treasures of refinement and learning, he prosecuted them with indefatigable vigour, and soon discovered his proficiency by translations from the classics, and epigrams in the learned languages. But in this agreeable path his progress was speedily interrupted. His father, having destined him for his own profession, looked upon elegant learning with a feeling not uncommon even in our days, as not only unnecessary to a barrister, but even inconsistent with great proficiency in the knowledge of law. Considering it therefore, his duty to dis-

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education practised in Athens, where we find every young man ambitious of instruction a constant attendant, both in public and private, on Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, or some other teacher distinguished for his acquirements. At Rome a similar course was pursued; and we thus find Cicero describing his early education: "Ego autem à patre ita eram deductus ad Scævolam, sumptâ virili toga, ut, quoad possem, et mihi liceret, à senis latere nunquam discederem. Ita multa ab eo prudenter disputata, multa etiam breviter et commode dicta, memoriæ mandabam: fierique studebam ejus prudentia doctior." Lælius, sive de Amicitiâ.

* More's Life, by his great-grandson, Thomas More, edit. 1726. p. 9.

courage the propensity of his son towards pursuits which might obstruct his future fortune, he determined, as the most effectual method, to make his allowances so scanty, that nothing could be spared from them to procure instruction in his favourite studies.* This act of parsimony, although, on that account, extremely mortifying to him, was attended, as he afterwards acknowledged, with beneficial effects, in restraining him from those dissolute companions and habits to which so many youths entrusted with a lavish command of money owe the ruin of their studies, their health, and their morals. His uncommon industry, however, still compensated the want of opportunities; and he would willingly have devoted his life to pursuits in which he found so much gratification, had not the displeasure of a father, whom he tenderly loved and respected, compelled him to give another direction to his exertions.

* Erasm. Epist. 447. ad Huttenium. "Juvenis ad Græcas literas sese applicuit, adeo non opitulante patre, viro alioque prudenti, proboque, ut ea conantem omni subsidio destitueret; ac pene pro abdicato haberet, quod a patriis studiis desciscere videretur." Erasmus is very angry that the attention of More was thus directed from literary pursuits, and often takes occasion to wreak his resentment on what he accounted the barbarous profession of the law. He calls it "professio a veris literis alienissima:" he speaks with great contempt of the English laws, "quibus nihil illiteratius;" and says, in excuse for More's aversion to the profession, "Ab hoc cum non injuria abhorreret adolescentis ingenium, melioribus rebus natum," &c.

1499. At Lincoln's Inn.

After having passed two years at Oxford, he removed first to New Inn, and afterwards to Lincoln's Inn, to prosecute the study of law. But although he neglected not the requisite preparations for this profession, he entered upon it with reluctance; for, besides his propensity to letters, there were other circumstances which gave a different bent to his inclinations. His mind, naturally susceptible and ardent, had been early tinctured with sentiments of devotion; nor had it wholly escaped that degrading superstition, which the defects of his more early education, and the conversation of illiterate companions, naturally communicated. Subsequently his acquaintance with the authors of better times, joined to a disposition full of humanity, had imparted liberality to his opinions, had disposed him to censure the vices of the clergy, and to jest with many absurdities of the church of Rome. Still, however, some prejudices of education had taken too firm a hold of his mind to be eradicated. Impressed with the efficacy of those austerities, on which so much reliance was placed in that age, he perpetually mortified himself with watching and fasting, and used to wear a hair shirt next his skin, a practice which, even in his highest exaltation, he never wholly relinquished. Every Friday, and also on high fasting days, he subjected himself to the discipline of a hard knotted cord; and even when he indulged in what he accounted a night of repose, he

was accustomed to lie on a bench, or on the bare ground, with a log under his head, allowing himself at most only four or five hours of sleep. He took lodgings near the Charter-house, among the Carthusians, an order remarkable for the excess of their austerities; and here, during four years, he continued to perform a rigid course of mortification.*

In the meantime, he diligently attended the preaching of Dean Colet, whom he had chosen as his confessor; a man of talents, and an enemy to superstition, but of a remarkably austere temper, and thoroughly convinced that the unruly passions of the human frame require to be subdued by incessant severities. The object which More had in view, by this course of discipline and instruction, was to prepare himself for entering the rigid order of St Francis. Besides, however, the authority of his father, which strongly opposed this design, he was apprehensive of being unguardedly led into irregularities by the warmth of his temperament; and, being too conscientious to follow the example of some of the Romish clergy, he resolved to turn his views again to a profession in which the absurd prohibition of marriage did not counteract the intentions of nature. †

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* Roper, p. 3. More, p. 15.

† Erasm. Epist. 447. "Neque quicquam obstabat quo minus sese huic vitæ generi addiceret, nisi quod uxoris desiderium non

Appearance at the Bar;

During this course of monkish austerities, incompatible as it may appear with worldly business or the pleasures of taste, he does not seem to have relaxed either his legal studies or literary pursuits; and no sooner did he appear at the bar, than he began to practise with flattering prospects. He had already attracted much notice by public lectures on St Augustine's work De Civitate Dei. These lectures are said to have been extremely rational, seldom occupied with obscure theological discussions, but directed chiefly to explain the more important principles of morals, and to elucidate historical difficulties. Their eloquence and learning were such as to draw together crowded audiences; and even aged priests were not ashamed to receive instruction from a youth and a layman. * With peculiar satisfaction he observed among his hearers the learned Grocyn, his respected master at Oxford; and the reputation here acquired procured him the office of law-reader at Furnival's Inn, where he still farther increased the fame of his abilities. In the present age, it may seem strange that his progress at the bar should have been for-

posset excutere. Maluit igitur maritus esse castus, quam sacerdos impurus." Erasmus says in the same epistle, "Cum ætas ferret, non abhorruit a puellarum amoribus, sed citra infamiam; et sic ut oblatis magis fruerctur quam captatis, et animo mutuo caperetur potius quam coitu."

* Erasm. Epist. 447. More, p. 16. Stapleton, p. 161.

warded by reading lectures on one of the Fathers; * but, in his time, the professions of the law and church were by no means so accurately discriminated. The influence still retained by the ecclesiastical courts rendered all churchmen in some degree lawyers; and various important offices in the secular courts were generally occupied by ecclesiastics. In the court of chancery, which in so many instances controlled the judicatures at common law, the twelve masters, including the master of the rolls, were commonly doctors of the civil law; † and the office of chancellor, then as now the highest legal station in England, had for some reigns been invariably occupied by dignitaries of the church.

Having now resolved to devote himself to secular employments, he began to form a plan of life which might enable him to combine the fatigues of business with the recreation of literature. Among the illustrious characters whose example excited his emulation, while it directed his course, his notice was particularly attracted by Picus, the celebrated Prince of Mirandula. To render his countrymen partakers of the instruction which he had derived from the actions and writings of this accomplished

* These lectures on St Augustine were as entirely theological as the Boylean at present, and were delivered in the church of St Lawrence, Old Jewry.

† Blackstone, B. III. c. 27.

scholar, and generous patron of literature, he wrote his life, and, along with it, published his twelve precepts, with many of his learned and eloquent letters.*

1503. In the House of Commons; Before he had attained his twenty-third year, More was chosen a member of the House of Commons, a station, however, which at that time had attained a very small share of its present dignity and importance. The sanguinary and incessant contests between the houses of York and Lancaster, by rendering it necessary for each successive possessor of the throne to arm himself with the powers of a military despot, had greatly checked the rising independence of the Commons. Henry VII. who had acquired his crown by conquest, and who looked with suspicion and dread on the slightest interference with his authority, was particularly averse to bring before them any of his political measures. Their acknowledged right of imposing all taxes on the people, obliged him, indeed, to assemble them when he stood in want of pecuniary supplies; and he was also sufficiently willing to obtain their sanction for, and devolve on them a part of, the odium of his numerous attainders and confiscations. But no sooner were these purposes served, than the Commons were dismissed, as a weapon too dangerous to be long kept out of the scabbard. In such

* Stapleton, p. 162. More, p. 19.

a state of things, almost the only field for oratory which that house afforded, was either in opposing the requisitions of the crown for subsidies, or in proposing those conditions with which the Commons sometimes clogged their pecuniary grants. But, in a reign when perpetual conspiracies afforded such ready pretexts for accusation, either of these was a dangerous attempt. Besides, the duration of parliaments was too short and uncertain, and their authority too circumscribed, to afford scope for any scheme of ambition. The House of Commons was not then the road to distinction and power; no member could hope, by a successful opposition to the measures of the crown, to force himself into administration; and, under a monarch impatient of opposition, and almost unlimited in power, the strenuous and eloquent patriot, instead of advancing his fortunes, exposed his person and property to imminent danger. Hence, a seat in the House of Commons being often avoided as a source not only of expence, but of vexation and peril, was obtained with little difficulty by a man anywise distinguished.

In opposition.

But, in spite of the disadvantages which at that period attended a patriotic commoner, More discharged the trust reposed in him with fidelity and courage. Henry having required from his parliament a large contribution for the marriage of his eldest daughter with the King of Scotland, the de-

mand, whether from its magnitude, or the purpose to which it was to be applied, proved extremely unpopular among the Commons. Yet, from a just dread of the king's resentment, the measure seemed likely to pass in silence; when More, incapable of being deterred by any sense of personal danger from executing what he accounted his duty, boldly stood forward to oppose the requisition; and, reasoning with such eloquence and strength of argument as to rouse the courage of his colleagues, finally procured its rejection.*

This display of patriotism and fortitude, at his first entrance into public life, while it greatly increased his reputation, seemed to threaten the ruin of his prospects; for Henry could not hear, without indignation, that his avarice had been disappointed, and his authority thwarted, at the instigation of a youth distinguished by no rank or hereditary influence. The want of fortune, however, proved the safety of the young patriot; for it was a maxim with Henry to make his revenge, if possible, subservient to his avarice; and, as the present object of his resentment had nothing to lose, the king was more averse to risk a public clamour, by directly violating the privileges of the Commons. But that More might be sensible of his displeasure, and deterred from a similar opposition in future, he

* Roper, p. 4. Stapleton, p. 181.

contrived to fasten some groundless accusation on his father, Sir John More, and caused him to be shut up in the Tower, till he purchased his liberty, by paying for his pretended offence a fine of a hundred pounds.* Nor was Henry of a temper to be satisfied with this indirect revenge; and More, although he dexterously eluded the arts practised to draw from him confessions which might afford a colour for his accusation, yet well knew the folly of openly contending with his implacable ruler. His first thoughts were to avoid the danger by going abroad; and with that view he studied the French language; but although he laid aside this intention, he found it necessary to give up his practice at the bar, and live in complete retirement. †

Retirement.

This seclusion, while it threw a cloud over the dawn of his fortunes, was far from proving distasteful or irksome. Resuming with eagerness those elegant studies in which he had formerly made great proficiency, and applying himself also to history, mathematics, and in his leisure hours to music, he rivetted his early attachment to such pursuits, and greatly extended the range of his attainments. It is probably to this interval of retirement

* Equal, if we allow for the depreciation of money, to about eight hundred pounds in the present day.

† Roper, p. 4. More, p. 36.

and study that we are, in a considerable degree, to ascribe his subsequent eminence in literature; for his first entrance at the bar took place at so early a period, before his taste or his habits could be fully formed, that, had he continued, without interruption, engaged in his profession, we should have been in danger of losing, in the laborious man of business, the scholar, the poet, and the philosopher.

1509. Reappearance and success at the Bar.

The death of Henry VII. which happened about six years afterwards, enabling him to resume his practice at the bar, his talents and acquirements soon raised him to eminent distinction. His application to the immediate objects of his profession had been sufficient to procure him a profound knowledge of the laws of his country, while his extensive general information, his acquaintance with elegant literature, and his early habits of declaiming, gave to his eloquence an energy and attraction which never failed to produce a powerful impression. His abilities were, therefore, no sooner known to the public, than he began to be eagerly consulted and retained in many important causes; and in his practice and gains he equalled soon the most popular of his competitors;* a striking instance, yet by no means so rare as is generally imagined,

* Erasm. Epist. 447.

of success at the bar promoted by qualifications with which it is by many deemed incompatible. *

In his professional conduct various circumstances are recorded which singularly illustrate his moral delicacy. When any cause was offered to him, his first care was, by scrupulously inquiring into its circumstances, to ascertain whether justice was on the side on which he was to be retained; if he found it otherwise, he rejected the cause, whatever emolument might be held out to him, and whatever opportunity it might afford for the display of his talents; assuring the client, that he would not undertake "what he knew to be wrong, for all the wealth in the world." Professional conduct.

He frequently endeavoured to bring parties to an accommodation; and if in this friendly office he failed, he still pointed out the method by which the

* It may seem strange that either argument or example should be requisite to prove, that success in a profession where so much depends on general knowledge, on an intimate acquaintance with the general affairs of society, with the human heart, and the means of persuasion, should actually be promoted by great proficiency in these accomplishments. But unless we had the authority of Blackstone, joined to the examples of More, Bacon, Clarendon, Wilmot, Mansfield, Hailes, Kaimes, &c. &c. with some living examples, which it might appear flattery to name, we might be afraid, in opposition to prejudices still almost as rooted as at the commencement of the sixteenth century, to assert, that great eminence and success in the law are compatible with wit, imagination, a cultivated taste, and an attachment to refined literature.

suit might be carried on with least expence. While he undertook and prosecuted the cause of the poor with peculiar alacrity and zeal, he refused the price which they were so ill able to pay for justice; and from the widow and the orphan he would accept no recompence but what such actions unavoidably confer on a generous mind. *

Appointed Judge of the Sheriff's Court. 1514.

His talents and integrity having now raised him to high reputation, he was appointed, by the city of London, Judge of the Sheriff's Court, an office then accounted very honourable. In this station his conduct soon made it be generally remarked, that no one had decided so many causes in so short a space, or given such universal satisfaction by his decisions. At that period it was customary for the contending parties, previous to trial, to pay into court an established fee, which formed the perquisite of the judge; but More, whenever the circumstances of the party seemed to require it, remitted this fee, being determined that no one should be aggrieved while seeking the redress of his wrongs. While this disinterestedness, a virtue in public men which of all others most excites the popular admiration, added greatly to his fame, the returns of his profession fortunately kept pace with the liberality of his disposition. From

* Roper, p. 5.

his practice and office he derived an income of four hundred pounds a-year, a sum to which, allowing for the depreciation of money, six times the amount would, in the present day, be scarcely more than equivalent. *

His literary pursuits.

Yet, amidst the continual hurry of business in which he was involved, his active and indefatigable mind still found opportunity to devote some portion of his time to literary pursuits. In his earlier years, he had attached himself to compositions in verse; and, at a more mature period, he had laboured with much assiduity to acquire an elegant style in prose. In declamations, or speeches on various subjects, which, in that age, were a favourite species of composition, he often exercised his talents; and both wrote and delivered them with great applause. † His more laboured pieces were all composed in Latin; and, if they are somewhat deficient in grace and ease, we must make great allowances for him and the other writers of his time, who, from the rudeness of the languages in which they thought and usually spoke, were obliged to compose in a tongue acquired only from books.

History of Edward V.

It was during this period that he commenced a history of the two very short reigns which passed

* Roper, p. 5.

† Erasm. Tom. I. c. 260. edit. 1703.

during his own infancy, those of Edward V. and Richard III. On a work which suddenly breaks off in the middle of the narrative, and which can, therefore, be considered only as a fragment, it would be unfair to make particular comments, since the style must be accounted as unfinished as the argument. Its accuracy, however, seems amply to compensate for the want of elegance, since it has been copied by all succeeding historians, as the most authentic document of the period to which it relates. * It is much to be regretted that a historian, on whose veracity and judgment the most implicit dependence could be placed, did not continue his narrative through those events which fell immediately under his own observation. But More seems to have found greater delight in forming a kingdom of his own, for it was during this active period of his life that he wrote his most laboured and elegant work, the Utopia.

The Utopia. The Utopia is a philosophical romance, in which More, after the manner of Plato, erects an imaginary republic, arranges a society in a form entirely new, and endows it with institutions more

* Such is the observation of Mr Hume, in his History of England, note (K,) Vol. III. 8vo edit. In note (M) he opposes to all other contradictory accounts "the narrative of Sir Thomas More, whose singular magnanimity, probity, and judgment, make him an evidence beyond all exception. No historian, either of ancient or modern times, can possibly have more weight."

likely to secure its happiness than any which mankind have hitherto experienced. But, with an improvement on the model of Plato, the republic of the Utopians assumes an actual existence: it is discovered by an adventurous navigator in a distant part of the new hemisphere, where it had for many ages continued to flourish; and More only communicates to the world what he learned from the narrative of this intelligent eye-witness. The work is divided into two books, of which the first is occupied by a dialogue, containing a number of strictures on the most prominent defects in the political institutions of the old world. The pleasing manner in which this part of the work is written, the felicity of the style, the elegance of the satire, the acuteness of the remarks on men and manners, the freedom and manliness of the opinions, would have raised it to distinction in any age; but, in the rude and ignorant period when it appeared, they entitle it to high admiration. Similar praise is due to various passages in the second part, where the country, the manners, and the political institutions of the Utopians are described. Yet while we allow much to the ingenuity, much to the judgment of the author, it must be acknowledged, that many of the laws and practices of this new republic are by no means improvements; that the author has been more successful in exposing defects than in providing remedies; and that his regulations

are often fitted rather for the beings of his own fancy, than for those with whom the Creator has peopled this world. *

The reputation which More derived from the Utopia was proportioned to its merit. A philosophical romance, written in the language and with the spirit of an ancient Roman, was received with wonder and enthusiasm by the eager cultivators of ancient learning. He was greeted with poetical encomiums, and loaded with panegyrical epistles of immeasurable length. † With so much skill and apparent simplicity are the dialogue and the narrative conducted, that many persons considered them as real. Some envious critics even went so far as to affirm, that Hythlodæus (the traveller who relates these wonders) had not only furnished the materials, but had dictated the whole from beginning to end; while More, who now carried off all the reputation, had acted as a mere amanuensis. It is even said that some zealous Catholics, moved

* As this performance drew, in a particular manner, on More the attention of his contemporaries, and contributed, in no small degree, to extend his fame; as it affords a curious display of his views respecting many moral and political topics; and as, in our times, while the Utopia is familiarly spoken of by every man, little is generally known of it beyond the name; the reader will probably be desirous of some further account of the work. I have, therefore, subjoined a short sketch of it in Appendix I., where also will be found some particulars of More's other writings.

† See Stapleton, Vita Thomæ Mori, p. 184.

by the virtues of the Utopians, had serious thoughts of embarking in an attempt to achieve the good work of their conversion.

Patronizes literature.

While the reception of his Utopia extended the literary reputation of More, both at home and abroad, he began to be regarded, not only as a zealous cultivator, but as a liberal patron, of literature. Scholars did not then, as now, derive tho pecuniary rewards of their labours from the sale of their works: the number of readers was too small, and the expence, both of publishing and circulating books, in the infancy of printing and commerce, too great, to afford, in this way, almost any returns to an author. Every one, therefore, who, without patrimony, or some lucrative profession, devoted himself to literature, was obliged to have recourse, even for the means of subsistence, to the bounty of the wealthy. Reduced to the necessity of perpetually stimulating their languid generosity by assiduous court, by fulsome dedications, and long flattering epistles, even the most dexterous and importunate frequently failed in obtaining their precarious reward; and celebrated scholars had often scarcely bread to eat. * In such times, even the

* It is with sentiments of deep regret that we must peruse the account of the difficulties under which these early cultivators of learning, to whom the world owes so much, continually laboured. The distresses of Erasmus, the finest genius of his age, who contributed so much to free the human mind from darkness and bondage, are pe-

comparatively limited fortune of More, by occasionally relieving the necessities of men of genius, was capable of affording essential service to literature; while his liberality, overstepping the limits of prudence, often ministered to the wants of destitute scholars, without regarding the pressure of his own difficulties. *

His literary friendships.

Nor was he prevented by his professional pursuits from cultivating an acquaintance with almost all the more eminent literary characters of his age. Of those within his reach he enjoyed occasionally the conversation; with others at a distance he maintained a regular correspondence. In that age, various circumstances contributed to render epistolary intercourse a favourite practice with scholars. Destitute of those helps which a ready ac-

culiarly affecting. We are shocked to find him receiving, with joy, from a casual contributor, a few pieces of money. We are still more shocked to observe the effect of his difficulties in blunting his finer feelings. He seems at length to have considered mankind at large as a sordid race, on whom, callous as they were to the claims of merit, he was entitled to levy contributions by any means in his power, short of dishonesty. Hence we find him perpetually assailing the purses of his more wealthy friends with the most urgent solicitations, demanding sometimes a sum of money, sometimes a horse, which he made no scruple to sell as soon as he had received it. Though occasionally repulsed with very little ceremony, yet he often found this importunity successful, and was enabled to keep his horses, and drink his old wine, comforts necessary for his weak constitution. But for these what a price did he pay! See Jortin's Life of Erasmus.

* Erasm. Epist. 605.

cess to books now affords, they were doubly anxious to observe the progress of each other, and to profit by the attainments of the most successful. Yet the expence, the difficulty, and even the insecurity of passing from one country to another, rendered their personal interviews very unfrequent, and letters were almost their only means of communication. But, from the want of regular posts, even this mode of communication was rendered very uncertain; and if they missed the opportunity of occasional couriers, they could transmit their letters only by the expensive conveyance of special messengers.* This made their epistles extend to a length of which, in the present age, we can have no idea: the writers were anxious to crowd into a single letter a multiplicity of observations, and to draw forth, by their questions, a variety of information. A letter sometimes included the discussion of a whole controversy, the defence of particular opinions, and the refutation of adversaries. The number of such Latin epistles, or rather dissertations, which a literary man would write in the course of his life, is astonishing. Those of Erasmus, if we may judge from the many hundreds which are still preserved, must have amounted to

* Erasmus found himself under the necessity of retaining a number of young men to carry to different parts his numerous letters, and receive the gratuities of his friends. Jortin, Vol. I. p. 18.

several thousands; and if the remaining letters of More are less numerous, some of them, by their prodigious length, prove that he yielded to few in epistolary exertion.

More's chief literary correspondent, and most valued friend, was the celebrated Erasmus. These two were reputed the most elegant scholars, as well as the greatest wits, of their time. Frank, open, and animated, fond of indulging themselves in the most unrestrained freedom of conversation, and ready to extract amusement from almost every occurrence of life, their dispositions were remarkably congenial.* Before an opportunity occurred of

* If we may judge from the pictures of Holbein, they also bore, both in the form and expression of their countenances, a striking resemblance to each other. Their similarity in other respects was noticed by their contemporaries, as Erasmus informs us in the following passage, so elegant and so complimentary to More. It occurs in a letter to his correspondent, Richard Whitford. "Latine declamare cœpi, idque impulsore Thoma Moro, cujus, uti scis, tanta est facundia, ut nihil non possit persuadere vel hosti: tanta autem hominem caritate complector, ut etiam si saltare me, restimque ductare jubeat, sim non gravatim obtemperaturus. Neque enim arbitror, nisi me vehemens in illum fallit amor, unquam naturam finxisse ingenium hoc uno præsentius, promptius, occulatius, argutius, breviterque dotibus omnigenis absolutius. Accedit lingua ingenio par, tum morum mira festivitas, salis plurimum, sed candidi duntaxat; ut nihil in eo desideres quod ad absolutum pertineat patronum. Hortor autem ut et Moricam conferas, itaque judices, num quid in stylo sit discriminis inter nos, quos tu ingenio, moribus, affectibus, studiis, usque adeo similes esse dicere solebas, ut negares ullos gemellos magis inter se similes reperiri posse." Erasmi Opera, Tom. I. c. 266.

meeting, they had long, by report and correspondence, known and admired each other; and as their genius, their manners, their studies were alike, their first personal intercourse produced a friendship both warm and permanent.* Untinctured by the jealousy so often excited by similarity of pursuits, they admired and extolled each other, and, in spite of the arts of ill-designing persons, who envied their acquirements and fame, their attachment continued unabated to the end of their lives. Erasmus, whenever an opportunity occurs, seems to dwell with particular delight on every thing relating to More; his appearance, his manners, his habits, his accomplishments. †

* A story is related of More's first interview with Erasmus, which, although doubted by Jortin, ought perhaps to be mentioned, as it is repeated by nearly all the writers of More's life. When Erasmus came to England for the first time, it is said to have been contrived by the person who conducted him over, that he and More should meet, without either of them knowing of it, at the Lord Mayor's table, which was then open to literary men of every nation. A controversy happening to arise at dinner, Erasmus, according to a practice in those days, began to display his powers by defending the wrong side of the question. He was immediately opposed by More, and a brilliant display of wit and argument ensued between these antagonists. Erasmus, surprised to find himself so equally matched, a circumstance which perhaps had never occurred to him before, at length exclaimed with vehemence, "*Aut tu Morus es, aut nullus:*" to which More, equally surprised, replied, "*Aut tu es Erasmus, aut Diabolus.*" Stapleton, Vita Thomæ Mori. More's Life, by his great-grandson, Thomas More, p. 82, edit. 1627. Hoddesdon, p. 28, edit. 1662.

† In the following letter, where Erasmus describes his admired

Attracts the notice of Henry.

The reputation of More for integrity, ability, and learning, had, by this time, attracted the at-

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friend, in a letter to Hutten, if some of the particulars are so minute as to excite a smile, they fully show the high value which the writer entertained for More, and the interest with which he observed the most trifling circumstances connected with him,—"To begin with what is least known to you of More, his person is rather below than above the middle size, yet not so much as to be at all remarked; while, so perfect is the symmetry of his limbs, that no part seems capable of improvement. His skin is fair; his complexion pale, yet in no respect sickly, but slightly tinged throughout with a delicate transparent red; his hair chesnut, his beard thin, his eyes light grey, interspersed with some specks, a colour which usually denotes a most happy disposition, and is even accounted handsome among the British, while among our people (the Germans) black eyes are held in more esteem. The former imagine such eyes to indicate a character particularly free from all manner of vice. His countenance, completely corresponding with his disposition, is expressive of an agreeable and friendly cheerfulness, with somewhat of a habitual inclination to smile; and, to own the truth, appears more adapted to pleasantry than to gravity or dignity, although perfectly remote from vulgarity or silliness. From a boy, he was always most negligent of his outward appearance, and paid scarcely any attention to those things which the courtly Ovid seems to reckon the only cares worthy of men. From his present appearance at forty, I might conjecture that in his youth his person must have been graceful, had I not myself known him at the age of three-and-twenty. His constitution is rather good than robust; and while it is capable of sustaining the fatigues of any liberal employment, it is liable to few or no diseases. He has every prospect of being long-lived, since his father has attained a very advanced age, yet still remains fresh and vigorous. I never saw any one less nice in his choice of food. By a predilection derived from his father, water was, in his early years, his favourite drink; but that he might not appear singular or affected, he used to escape the notice of those who sat at table with him, by drinking water,

tention of Henry VIII. That prince, himself no mean scholar, according to the common rate of acquirements in that age, was passionately desirous to obtain distinction by his learning, and eager to enjoy both the conversation and applause of the learned. But More, besides being so distinguished a scholar, had also proved his capacity for public business, both in adjusting some very intricate and important disputes between the English merchants and the foreign company of the Steel-yard,* and in the assistance which he afforded to Tonstal, 1516. Bishop of Durham, during a mission to Flanders.† Henry having, on all these accounts, become eager to engage him in his service, commanded Wolsey

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or very small beer, out of a goblet. For the same reason, and that he might learn the general habits of society, he at times conformed to the custom of his countrymen, who drink by turns from the same vessel; and on these occasions he prevailed on himself to touch the wine with his lips. He is much fonder of those kinds of fare which are accounted coarse and common, than of the delicacies employed by the luxurious to stimulate the appetite. The most simple diet, milk and fruit, he prefers to the highest flavoured dishes on his table; so that his taste in food, like his other desires, seems to be formed by nature for simplicity and moderation. His voice is neither remarkably powerful nor weak, but readily heard; and is extremely distinct, yet by no means soft or melodious; for although he is remarkably fond of music, nature seems to have given him no powers for singing. His pronunciation is uncommonly plain and articulate, without either hurry or hesitation." Erasm. Epist. 447.

* Roper, p. 5. † Roper, p. 13. More, p. 39.

to make this wish known, and offer him a pension, as an earnest of future favours. * But this proposal, which most other men would have fondly embraced as a fair opening to wealth and honours, was viewed with very different eyes by More.

Aversion to a court, from love of ease and independence.

To the life of a courtier he had many causes of insurmountable dislike. Passionately fond of independence, he was most unwilling to look up to the precarious bounty of an arbitrary prince, for what he could better procure by the exercise of an honourable profession. As the ease, familiarity, and freedom which a man enjoys among his equals afforded him peculiar gratification, that constraint, formality, and constant attention to external show, which then, still more than now, infested courts, were no less his aversion. In his dress, which was simple, and even negligent to an unusual degree, † he used neither the silks, the scarlet, nor the ornaments of gold then in fashion among persons of his rank, unless when their omission might have been construed into disrespect. ‡ Still more indifferent to formalities of all sorts, and accounting a minute and constant attention to such trifles unworthy of a man, he was not solicitous to address others, and still less anxious to be addressed, with the studied terms and gestures which custom had

* Roper, p. 5. More, p. 38.

† More, p. 27. ‡ Erasm. Epist. 447.

prescribed.* So far only did he conform to fashionable usage, as to avoid the imputation of singularity, a trespass which, in his opinion, indicated no less vanity and weakness than a frivolous precision in imitating the prevailing modes.† To a person of such habits and such opinions, what could be more irksome than the ceremony of a court just escaped from barbarism, and still labouring under the cumbrous appendages of feudal pageantry?

Domestic avocations.

Nor was he less deterred from entering the king's service by that constant attendance which the monarchs of that age required from their ministers and courtiers. Though much occupied by the business of his profession, he still found means to spend some portion of almost every day in the bosom of his family, the scene of his most valued enjoyments. Having, soon after his appearance at the bar, married a lady of a good family, but very young, and entirely unacquainted with the world, he had studiously formed the manners and ideas of his companion for life to a correspondence with his own. Carefully instructed by her zealous tutor in polite literature, in music, in whatever seemed necessary to improve or adorn her mind, she became a woman in whose society he might have spent the remainder of his days with delight. But Provi-

* Erasm. Epist. 447. † More, p. 28.

dence had determined otherwise: she died at an early age, after having brought him several children, of whom a son and three daughters survived her. *

The care of his family, to which it was impossible he could attend, amidst the perpetual distractions of business, did not permit him to remain long a widower. His second wife was a widow, already well advanced in years, and retaining no very striking indications of early beauty, but remarkable for her dexterity in the management of family affairs. Although she was little endowed with any quality which could excite attachment, he behaved to her with the same complacency as if she had been both amiable and young; and by his kind and playful manner, procured from her a more ready and complete obedience, than was ever obtained by the rude and repulsive tone of command. Though Mrs More was now beyond the prime of life, of a temper by no means tractable, and remarkably solicitous about her domestic affairs, he prevailed on her to take lessons on several of his favourite musical instruments, and regularly devote a portion of every day to these accomplishments. †

Education of his children.

In the intervals of business, the education of his children formed his principal avocation, as well as his greatest pleasure. His son, whose faculties

* Erasm. Epist. 447. † Ibid.

seemed, by nature, little capable of cultivation, proved a remarkable instance of what may be effected by careful instruction. By methods adapted to his capacity, he acquired a competent knowledge both of literature and business; and became respectable, not only as a man of worth, but as a member of the community, and the head of a family. But it was in the accomplishments of his daughters that More found the most gratifying reward of his cares. His opinions respecting female education are distinctly related by Erasmus, and differed very widely from what the comparative rudeness of that age might have led us to expect. By nothing, he justly thought, is female virtue so much endangered as by idleness, and the necessity of amusement; nor against these is there any safeguard so effectual as an attachment to literature. Some security is indeed afforded by a diligent application to various sorts of female employments; yet these, while they employ the hands, give but partial occupation to the mind. But well-chosen books at once engage the thoughts, refine the taste, strengthen the understanding, and confirm the morals. Female virtue, informed by the knowledge which they impart, is placed on the most secure foundations, while all the milder affections of the heart, partaking in the improvement of the taste and fancy, are refined and matured. More was no convert to the notion, that the possession of

knowledge has the effect of rendering women less pliant; nothing, in his opinion, was so untractable as ignorance. Although to manage with skill the ordinary detail of feeding and clothing a family, be an essential portion in the duties of a wife and a mother; yet, to secure the affections of a husband, during the continued and permanent intercourse of the married state, he judged it no less indispensable to possess the qualities of an intelligent and agreeable companion. Nor ought a husband, if he regards his own happiness, to turn aside with fastidious negligence, from the task of repairing the usual defects of female education. Never can he hope to be so truly beloved, esteemed, and respected, as when his wife confides in him as her friend, and looks up to him as her instructor. *

Such were the opinions, with regard to female education, which More maintained in discourse, and supported by his practice. His daughters, rendered proficients in music, and other elegant accomplishments proper for their sex, were also instructed in Latin, the only language in which, at that period, a more refined literature was to be found. Their progress corresponded with the zeal of their father, since they read, wrote, and conversed in the language of Rome with equal facility and correctness. When compelled by busi-

* Erasm. Epist. 605.

ness to be absent from home, he maintained a frequent intercourse by letter with his children, receiving from them an account of every step in their progress, and giving them, in return, such instructions as seemed most requisite to their improvement.* With their tutors, also, he maintained a correspondence equally regular; and while he expressed his obligations to them for cultivating the abilities of his children, he besought them always to recollect, that learning was valuable only as subservient to the conduct of life, and the improvement of the heart.† He entreated that any appearance of ostentation and vanity in his daughters might be checked; and that their superior knowledge might not be allowed to destroy that unassuming manner, which is among the first of female virtues, or to produce a pedantry which is no less intolerable than ignorance. Their knowledge, he felt assured, would, as it extended, teach them rather to be humble than proud, since it would show them how little they knew, how much they had to learn; while the refinement of their taste would contribute to harmonize their affections, and shed a more exquisite gentleness over their manners.‡

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* Stapleton, p. 257. More, p. 131.

† Letter to Gurmal, in Stapleton, p. 253.

‡ Some of the letters of More, which throw great light on his sentiments concerning education, are inserted in Appendix II.

The effects resulting from this assiduous attention soon became conspicuous; and the School of More, as it was termed, attracted general admiration.

In the mean time, Mrs More, their stepmother, a notable economist, by distributing tasks of which she required a punctual performance, took effectual precautions that they should not remain unacquainted with female works, and with the internal management of a family. For all these purposes, which together appear so far beyond the ordinary industry of women, their time was found amply sufficient, because no part of it was wasted in idleness or trifling amusements. Erasmus, from whom we derive these particulars, and who was often an inmate of this family, captivated with the easy manners, the animated conversation, the extraordinary accomplishments of these young ladies, could not help owning himself a complete convert to More's sentiments of female education. Yet while he admired their improvement, and shared in the pleasures it diffused, he could not help remarking one day to his friend, how severe a calamity it would be if such accomplished beings, whom he had so painfully and successfully laboured to improve, should happen to be snatched away! "If they are to die," replied More, without hesitation, "I would rather have them die well-informed than ignorant." "This reply," continues Erasmus, "reminded me of a saying of Phocion,

whose wife, as he was about to drink the poison, according to his sentence, exclaimed, "Ah! my husband, you die innocent!" "And would you, my wife," he rejoined, "rather have me die guilty?" *

His domestic happiness.

More's family lived in a house which he had built at Chelsea, on a large scale, but with more attention to comfort than splendour. It was surrounded with gardens extending to the Thames, † and in adorning and beautifying these, a work which he himself superintended, he found incessant employment for that train of servants, whom the custom of the age obliged persons of his rank to maintain, and who, by their idle habits, usually contributed to diffuse corruption. ‡ His taste for natural history, and for observing the instincts of various animals, afforded them another source of constant occupation. His collection, which he had procured with much labour and expence, was disposed in such a manner, that the eye of the guest, on entering the approach to his house, was every where amused with rare birds, quadrupeds, and other natural curiosities. § If any of his servants discovered a taste for reading, or an ear for music,

* Erasm. Epist. 605.

† This house was situated at the north end of Beaufort Row, extending westward, at the distance of about a hundred yards from the Thames. Lysons's Environs of London, Vol. II. p. 80.

‡ Hoddesdon, p. 30. § Erasm. Epist. 447.

he allowed them to cultivate their favourite pursuit. To preclude all improper conversation before children and servants at table, a domestic was accustomed to read aloud certain passages, so selected as to amuse at the time, and to afford matter for much entertaining conversation. * "I would call this house," says Erasmus, "the academy of Plato, were it not injustice to compare it to a place where the usual disputations concerning figures and numbers were only occasionally interspersed with disquisitions about the moral virtues. A house, in which every one studies the liberal sciences, where the principal care is virtue and piety, where idleness never appears, where intemperate language is never heard, where regularity and order are preserved by mere dint of kindness and courtesy, where every one performs his duty, and yet all are so cheerful, as if mirth were their only employment—such a house ought rather to be termed a practical school of the Christian religion." †

Much of the happiness of More's family, of its perpetual good humour, and unbroken harmony, is to be attributed to his own peculiar felicity of temper. His son-in-law, Mr Roper, who lived in his house for sixteen years, assures us, that, during all that period, his countenance was never seen cloud-

* Stapleton, p. 250. Hoddesdon, p. 30.

† Farrago Epist. lib. 27, cited in Stapleton, p. 247.

ed, nor his voice altered with anger. * Disappointments, even when serious, he received with unruffled composure, and his reproofs of negligence or misconduct were either very innocent raillery, or mild, though serious, admonition. This tranquillity and kindness, diffusing themselves over his family, every thing was there conducted with gentleness, and the loud language of anger and reproach altogether banished. As any trifling quarrel, which happened accidentally to arise, was, by a general interference, immediately adjusted, none of those little sources of ill-humour, which often destroy the peace of families more than circumstances of a more serious nature, were suffered to rankle and breed new dissensions. Mrs More, acquiring, from the influence of such humanizing habits, a benevolence little to be expected from the natural asperity of her temper, behaved to her step-daughters with the same kindness, and was in return beloved by them with the same sincerity, as if she had been their mother. When the son and daughters were at length married, as the family could not endure the idea of separation, More contrived to accommodate the whole in his own house, as well as eleven grandchildren, who were, in time, the fruit of their marriages. It contained, besides, a step-daughter by his second wife, and an orphan

* Roper, p. 13.

girl, whom he had generously educated along with his daughters, and who well deserved the bounty she received. The unsullied reputation and prosperity of the family were no less conspicuous than its harmony. "The happiness of that house," says Erasmus, "seems secured by a law of fate; no one has lived in it without having his condition improved; no one has had a stain thrown on his reputation."*

His social intercourse.

The pleasures of this domestic circle were enlivened by a continual succession of learned and ingenious visitors, whom the reputation, the wit, the hospitality of More, drew around him. "By no one," says Erasmus, "are friendships more readily formed, more diligently cultivated, more stedfastly retained. If he discovers any one, with whom he has formed an intimacy, to be irreclaimably vicious, he gradually discontinues the intimacy, but never breaks it off in an abrupt or mortifying manner. On the other hand, it is in the intercourse of those friends, whose dispositions prove congenial to his own, that the chief delight of his life seems to be placed. An utter enemy to gaming, and all those unmeaning amusements, by which the idle part of society endeavour to escape from the insupportable languor of existence, his leisure hours are spent in the conversation of a society

* Erasm. Epist. 447.

where his own politeness, ease, and vivacity, diffuse universal good humour and gaiety. Careless of his own affairs, he is ever most assiduous in the service of his friends; and, to sum up his character in a few words, if the pattern of a perfect friend be required, let it be sought for in More." * From the society which he thus collected around him, he was careful to banish whatever might encroach upon its freedom or cheerfulness. Regardless of that estimation which men of his rank and station so eagerly sought from giving sumptuous and ceremonious entertainments to the great nobles; he enjoyed in the society of his friends and neighbours an intercourse the more agreeable, as it was wholly unembarrassed by restraint. † As he possessed, in an eminent degree, the faculty of conducting an argument with spirit, yet with mildness, and of appeasing the angry feelings of others, by some happy stroke of humour, the conversation at his table was always interesting, and often brilliant. ‡

That More should have been unwilling to abandon, for the joyless ceremonies of a court, a society so captivating, and which owed to himself the whole structure of its happiness, cannot excite our surprise. The care with which he watched over its enjoyments, is expressed with much feeling in an epistle, where he excuses himself to a friend for

* Erasm. Epist. 447. † More, 149. ‡ Roper, p. 13.

some delay in the completion of his Utopia. "While I am continually engaged in the business of my profession, in pleading some causes, in hearing others, in settling some as arbitrator, and in deciding others as judge; while I am under the necessity of paying a visit of business to one, and a visit of courtesy to another; while I thus devote nearly the whole of the day abroad to others, and the remainder to my family at home, I leave for myself, that is, for literature, no time at all. For when I return home, I must needs converse with my wife, trifle with my children, talk with my servants. All these I account matters of business, since they cannot be avoided, unless a man should choose to be a stranger in his own family. It is, besides, as indispensable to our happiness as to our duty, to render ourselves, by every means in our power, agreeable to those whom either nature, or chance, or our own choice, has rendered the companions of our lives. Let us be cautious only not to spoil them by too much compliance, or, by over-indulgence, to convert those who should obey us into our masters." *

Dangers of a courtier's situation.

But, besides the loss of domestic enjoyments, the penetration of More discovered other forcible reasons for declining the proffered favours of his sovereign. He knew how vain it was to oppose

* Morus ad Ægidium.

reason to the passions of an arbitrary prince, and he felt his integrity too stubborn and unaccommodating to utter what would please, in opposition to his conviction. In the present improved state of our political constitution, the monarch often finds it necessary, from the influence of public opinion, to appoint and retain in office persons who would otherwise by no means be his choice. If resolved to give way to his dislike or resentment, he can merely deprive the minister of his rank and emoluments; while the statesman out of place always finds a considerable and active Opposition ready to receive him. By a well-directed exertion of his talents he may still hope to render himself formidable to the court, and even to regain the situation of which he has been deprived. But, in the age of More, the statesman, as he owed his elevation solely to the personal favour of the monarch, sunk, as soon as it was withdrawn, into obscurity and neglect, unless unhappily destined to a severer fate. If conspicuous either for his talents, or the influence which he had enjoyed, his successors, fearful lest he might, to their ruin, regain the favour he had lost, too often employed every art to inflame the resentment of his sovereign, and accomplish his final destruction. And if the king could be brought to consent to the death of a degraded minister, it was only necessary to bring an accusation, founded on some act which

he had sanctioned in compliance with the express commands of his monarch, or perhaps on allegations altogether false. Debarred, by the barbarous customs of that age, from pleading in his own defence, from producing the witnesses of his innocence, or confronting his accusers, he could only look forward to certain condemnation; while an obsequious parliament, or trembling jury, however convinced of his innocence, would not venture to thwart the will of the sovereign.

Character of Henry VIII.

These unfortunate circumstances, calculated to render the authority and life of an upright statesman so precarious under any monarch, were greatly aggravated by the capricious and ungovernable disposition of Henry VIII. Susceptible of violent passions, from the natural warmth of his temper, he had become habituated, by the arbitrary power placed early in his hands, to give way, without control, to their successive impulses. The passion of the moment seemed wholly to engross his faculties, and no consideration of morality or prudence could restrain him from pursuing its gratification. His attachments and friendships were uncommonly ardent while they lasted, but his desires were no sooner attracted by some new objects, than all remembrance of his former inclinations seemed to be obliterated. The most beloved wife, and the most favourite minister, if they stood in the way of

his new propensity, were, with callous indifference, hurried to the scaffold.

To More, who had imbibed, from the authors of Greece and Rome, sentiments of manly freedom, the degradation, no less than the danger, of such a precarious dependence on the will of an arbitrary monarch, was deeply repugnant. After many earnest entreaties, therefore, to be excused from accepting the favours intended him, (for it was dangerous to refuse even the invitations of Henry, unless in the humble form of a request,) the king was graciously pleased to dispense, for the present, with his attendance.

More appointed Treasurer of the Exchequer.

But the ability displayed in the management of a cause, which attracted much public notice, soon afterwards gave an additional lustre to More's reputation. A large ship of the Pope's having been seized in the port of Southampton by the king's officers, was reclaimed on the part of his Holiness: and More, on account both of his professional celebrity, and his thorough acquaintance with Latin, which enabled him readily to explain the arguments on both sides to the Roman legate, was selected to plead in favour of its restoration. The claim was argued before the Lord Chancellor, and all the judges in the Star Chamber; the exertions of More were crowned with success; and Henry, still more strongly incited by this new display of talents, to engage him in his service, would no

longer admit of an excuse. * More, however reluctant, being compelled to submit, was appointed master of the requests, the best place which, at the moment, happened to be vacant. He was soon afterwards created a knight and a privy-counsellor,
1519. and, in the following year, raised to the office of treasurer of the exchequer. †

In great favour,

Henry was greatly delighted with More. He found him not only a ready and penetrating counsellor in affairs of state, but thoroughly acquainted

from his learning,

with literature and the sciences of the times. Astronomy, in that age a rude science, and still connected with the mysteries of astrology, had occasionally occupied the attention of More, and was held in peculiar esteem by Henry. It was, therefore, not unusual to observe the king and his minister stationed in the night on the roof of the palace, counting the stars, and tracing the forms of the constellations. ‡ But the subject most grateful to both, and which most frequently engaged their conversation, was theology. Henry, who greatly valued himself on his skill in polemical divinity, and who was at this time a most orthodox Romanist, had determined to exert his pen in defence of the papal throne, against Luther, the arch heretic, by whom it was now assailed. The trea-

* Roper, p. 6. More, p. 43. † More, 47.
‡ Roper, p. 6. Stapleton, p. 171. More, p. 48.

tise which he wrote on this occasion was arranged and corrected by More; * and whatever might be the respective shares of the king and the minister in the performance, to the former it procured, from the pope, the much valued title of Defender of the Faith; while, to the latter, it brought, for the present, an increase of royal favour.

wit, and humour.

More, however, possessed talents of a very different description, which rendered him a favourite companion in the gayer moments of the king. We have seen that, even when a boy in the family of Cardinal Morton, he had distinguished himself by an uncommon flow of vivacity and humour; and, as he advanced in years, these agreeable qualities seemed to increase. In his youth, he wrote comedies, and, according to the custom of the times, bore a part in their private representation. Of his epigrams, for which he had a particular talent, some are still preserved. Lucian was his favourite author; he translated several of his dialogues; and a letter sent to a friend, with a copy of the translation, shows his ardent admiration of that ingenious satyrist.† The mind of Erasmus was cast nearly in the same mould; and his ludicrous Encomium Moræ was, as that author himself informs us, written at the suggestion of More, and dedi-

* See a letter from More to Secretary Cromwell.

† Morus ad Ruthalum.

cated to him, as the proper patron of every thing humorous. Delighted with every stroke of wit, More was even satisfied to be himself its object, and did not refuse to join in a laugh raised at his own expence. Unless when some particular occasion required a more serious turn, his conversation with women was sportive and rallying. The severe study of the law, an incessant round of business, a strong tincture of devotion, and the austere penances in which he often exercised himself, diminished nothing of his natural vivacity and proneness to humour. Carelessness of wealth and honours, conscious integrity, contempt of death, and full reliance on the promises of religion, joined to perfect freedom from those malevolent and sinister purposes which cloud the countenances of men, left his mind at ease, and gave his temper a serenity and buoyancy which resisted every accident of fortune. Alive to all the beauties of nature or art, and equally sensible of their defects, his humour was keen, yet chastened by an unwillingness to offend; while his vivacity, arising from a warm sensibility, mingled with benevolence, was brilliant and inexhaustible.

These qualities soon rendered the king's demands on his attendance incessant. If Henry was inclined to throw all care aside, and abandon himself to mirth in the company of the queen, as was often his practice, More never failed to be invited

to the party. To a man of ambition and intrigue, nothing could have been more desirable than this constant and familiar access to the sovereign, at those moments when restraint was banished, and his mind rendered pliant by hilarity. But as More had no private purposes to serve, these honours were, in his eyes, a very unequal compensation for the loss of ease and liberty. Unable to reconcile his disposition or his habits to the perpetual ceremonies and tasteless pageantry of a court, he compares himself to a man who, unaccustomed to ride, sits very awkwardly in his saddle.* Henry, aware of his witty favourite's attachment to freedom, used frequently, in his merry moods, to condole with him on the misery (whimsical enough, as he no doubt imagined) of being dragged to court, and chained to the company of his prince. More, finding, at length, that he could scarcely steal one evening in a month, to enjoy himself at home with his family, in that intercourse which formed the great pleasure of his life, had recourse to an innocent stratagem. He abstained from any open expression of chagrin, but began gradually, and without exciting observation, to refrain from his usual facetiousness at the royal parties; and his company, being found less entertaining, was in time less required. †

* Stapleton, p. 229. More, p. 45. † Roper, p. 7. Stapleton, 171.

His public conduct.

Of the share which More had in the public measures of that period, the information which has reached us is extremely imperfect. Plans of policy, in that age, were much less important and systematic than those to which we are now accustomed: they were hardly ever discussed before the legislature; and the counsels given by each minister, being usually accounted among the mysteries of state, were seldom publicly known. The measures of each reign are, for the most part, indiscriminately attributed by historians to the monarch, and the minister is often defrauded of his due tribute of applause. The chief direction of affairs was at this time in the hands of Cardinal Wolsey; a man who, to great talents and consummate address, joined a vanity which no applause could satiate, and an ambition which grasped beyond even his exorbitant power. Conscious of the tenure by which he held his authority, he readily stooped to any concession which could secure the favour of his prince; but while desirous that Henry should consider himself the constant and only source of those measures, which flowed in fact from his uncontrolled minister, he was no less solicitous to impress on the world a very different opinion. In private he communicated his intentions to the monarch, in the most submissive and artful terms, seeming to follow where in fact he led; but in the eyes of the public he gave his acts

every appearance of unrestrained and independent authority. Aware that the lofty pretensions of the son of an Ipswich butcher produced rather astonishment than respect among the people, he endeavoured to dazzle them by his splendour, and abash them by his arrogance.

With a man of this description More could have few opinions, and still fewer sentiments in common: but sensible that any decided opposition would have been fruitless, he confined himself almost exclusively to the duties of his office, which he discharged with unremitting zeal. But if he found it vain to resist many measures which he disapproved, we may conclude that he was guilty of no improper compliance, since, during his continuance in office, his reputation for integrity increased both with the prince and the people. When measures, which to him appeared exceptionable, were proposed, he made no scruple to express his opinion of them; a conduct far from agreeable to Wolsey, who was willing enough to make use of his abilities, but by no means satisfied to encounter his opposition. On one occasion, it is said, that the Cardinal, with much self-complacency, laid before him the draught of a measure which he was about to carry into execution, and requested his sentiments freely on every part of it. More, having attentively considered it, began, with his usual sincerity, to point out some things to be suppres-

sed, others to be amended, others to be added; till at length, Wolsey, unable to suppress his mortification and wrath, asked him if he was not ashamed to prove himself a fool, by objecting to what all the other wise men of the council had approved? "Thanks be to God," replied More gravely, "that the king's majesty hath but one fool in his right honourable council!" *

Influence on national improvement.

But while he seems to have been little ambitious to interfere with affairs of state, his influence on national improvement was both conspicuous and important. Convinced that nothing could more essentially promote the extension of knowledge and refinement than the diffusion of those treasures which had been saved from the wreck of antiquity, he employed all the weight which he possessed, either from his own reputation or the favour of his prince, to excite a general enthusiasm for the cultivation of ancient learning. While professed scholars, disgusted with the smallness of their pecuniary rewards, too frequently contributed to bring literary pursuits into utter disregard, by representing them as not only unprofitable, but ruinous; More took every opportunity to declare, that to literature he owed more confirmed health, a sounder mind, an ampler fortune; that, while he had thus acquired the favour of his prince, and conciliated the love of

* More, p. 57.

his family and the esteem of strangers, he had become more agreeable to his friends, more useful to his country, more adapted to the duties of every station, and, finally, more acceptable in the sight of heaven. After the most difficult and important labours, he was found with the authors of Greece and Rome in his hands; while, at the same time, it was observed, that no man was more easy of access at all hours, more ready to oblige, more cheerful in company, or more polished in his manners. *

These circumstances, when added to the example which More set in the education of his own family, were soon attended with the happiest consequences. That literature, which had hitherto, for the most part, been looked on as equally unfit for use or ornament, now became an object of more general attention, and a learned education began to be considered as a necessary appendage to rank. † The effects which his maxims and example produced on female education were peculiarly striking: the daughters of noble families began to vie with each other in literature, and those of More were only the first English ladies who could write and speak in the languages of Greece and Rome. The Princesses Mary and Elizabeth, as well as their relative the Lady Jane Grey, were educated

* Erasm. Epist. 605. † Ibid.

along with their brother Edward; and if Mary, from habits already too confirmed, profited little by this instruction, its effects in imparting strength and dignity to the female mind were proved by Elizabeth on a throne, and by Jane on a scaffold. The happy consequences of the general diffusion of useful knowledge among females of distinction were soon felt and acknowledged. As mothers, they communicated their attainments to their children; as the leaders of fashion, they rendered them the desire even of the gay and vain; and the succeeding reign of Elizabeth became already an Augustan age of English literature.

1523. Speaker of the House of Commons.

After holding the treasurership of the exchequer three years, More was, by the king's direction, chosen speaker of the House of Commons.* When that arbitrary monarch signified his pleasure on such occasions, neither the House durst refuse to appoint the person he nominated, nor the person nominated refuse the appointment. It was, however, with much reluctance that More undertook the office. The speaker of the House of Commons, in our times, holding a situation equally honourable and independent, since the court can neither control nor awe him, can act in security as a man of spirit and integrity. But under the reign of Henry VIII., the opposition between the de-

* Roper, p. 7.

mands of the court and the interests of his country, frequently placed him in the most disagreeable and dangerous situation. While, as a man of principle, it was often impossible to submit to the former; he was in danger, if he ventured to maintain the latter, of incurring his own ruin, without any benefit to his country.

These difficulties were experienced by More, almost immediately after his appointment. The king, reduced by his extravagance to great straits, having demanded a large supply, Wolsey, who knew that the Commons, though abundantly compliant in almost every other respect, were often very determined in their refusal of money, especially when they did not approve the manner of expending it, resolved, in hopes of overawing the members, to be present at the moving of the question. With this view, he repaired in state to the House; and having shown, in a solemn speech, the necessity of the supply, concluded with requiring an immediate answer to the king's demand. The House, however, irritated at this extraordinary stretch of power, and resolved not to be thus deprived of their right of deliberation, received his commands in profound silence; and though he successively addressed himself to each of the most considerable members, none of them could be induced to reply. Enraged at this treatment, which appeared to him contemptuous, he told them that the

obstinacy of their silence was astonishing, unless, perhaps, their custom was to reply only by their speaker; in which case he now made the same demand to him, which he had already made to the whole House. More, desirous rather to elude this ill-timed requisition, than to urge matters to an extremity, apologized, with great apparent reverence, for the conduct of the members, abashed, as they must be, by the presence of so noble and extraordinary a personage. He showed that to return an answer to his Majesty's message by any other persons, how great soever, than some of their own members, was contrary to the ancient privileges of the House; and he concluded by humbly declaring that, though all the members had entrusted him with their voices, yet, unless they could also put their several judgments into his head, he alone was not able, in so weighty a matter, to make a proper reply to his Grace. This evasive answer was far from satisfying the haughty Cardinal, who hastily rose up, and, in great wrath, quitted the House.*

More generally found his wit and thorough command of temper the most effectual defence against Wolsey, who was, to the last degree, impatient of contradiction. A few days after this transaction in the House of Commons, the Cardinal

* Roper, p. 10. Stapleton, p. 285.

happening to meet with him, complained loudly of his behaviour, and at length exclaimed, "Would to God you had been at Rome, Mr More, when I made you speaker." "Your Grace not offended," replied the other, "so would I too; for then I should have seen an ancient and famous city, which I have long desired to see." *

His disputes with Wolsey.

But though, by this sort of management, joined to a behaviour perfectly inoffensive, he kept on apparently good terms with Wolsey; yet the vain and ambitious Cardinal could not behold his shining talents, his great popularity, and the warm friendship which the king often expressed for him, without feeling strong sentiments of jealousy and dislike. But as it was not possible to remove so great a favourite from court, unless under pretence of promoting his advancement; an embassy, which was about to be sent into Spain, seemed to afford a suitable occasion for executing this design. Wolsey, accordingly, expatiated to the king on the learning, wisdom, and tried dexterity of More; declaring, that there was no other person in the kingdom so fit to conduct the negociation. Henry, readily assenting to these opinions, and glad to have found an opportunity of gratifying More, immediately acquainted him with his intended honours. But More, who felt a strong aversion to

* Roper, p. 10. Stapleton, p. 285.

the appointment, represented to his Majesty that the climate of Spain was peculiarly ill suited to his constitution, and would probably prove fatal; yet that, notwithstanding, if it was his Majesty's pleasure, he would prepare for the journey. Henry, who had no suspicion of the Cardinal's stratagem, replied, that he intended him good, and not harm; and since he declined the appointment, would think of some other person. *

Opinions in political economy.

On some important questions of political economy, which have in later times been so strangely misunderstood, the ideas of More appear to have been enlightened and profound. A subsidy having, on one occasion, been demanded by the government for carrying on a war against the Emperor, the Commons could not deny that it was requisite for the exigencies of the state; but they urged as an apology for refusing it, that, as it must be paid in money, and not in goods, all the coin in their hands would be drained away; that the whole course of sales and purchases would thus be altered, and the most ruinous consequences ensue; that the landlord, if he received only corn and cattle from his tenants, instead of money, could not dispose of these commodities for the various articles of which he stood in need; that a stop would necessarily be put to all traffic and merchandise; that,

* Roper, p. 12. More, p. 53.

consequently, the shipping of the kingdom would decay; and that, in fine, as our coin, being employed in the payment of our forces abroad, would be transferred to enrich our enemies, the whole nation would, from want of money, and the consequent destruction of its commerce, both internal and external, become obscure and barbarous. In answer to this reasoning, More ridiculed the absurd supposition, that a kingdom could be enriched by the money introduced into it by an invasion; and exposed the folly of imagining, that the wealth of a country could be more injured by transferring its money than any of its other commodities into the hands of its government, or even of foreign nations. He argued, "that the money ought not to be accounted as lost or taken away, but only transferred into other hands of their kindred or nation; that herein no more was done than what we ordinarily see in markets, where, though the money change masters, yet every one may be accommodated." "You have no reason," continued he, "to fear this penury or scarceness of money, the intercourse of things being so established throughout the whole world, that there is a perpetual derivation of all that can be necessary to mankind. Thus your commodities will ever find out money; while, not to go far, I shall produce your own merchants only, who, let me assure you, will be always as glad of your corn and cattle, as you can be of any thing they bring

you." * Here we find the sagacity of More penetrating to those complicated truths with respect to the nature and use of money, the developement of which, nearly three centuries afterwards, raised Adam Smith to the highest station among political economists.

Employment in embassies;

For the conduct of affairs requiring peculiar sagacity, management, and command of temper, More was held in high estimation; yet he seems to have anxiously declined diplomatic missions, both as they would have placed him too directly under the control of Wolsey, and have removed him to a distance from his family. † Occasionally, however, he was obliged to act as a negociator; and having attended Wolsey in his embassy to France in 1527, he acquitted himself so much to the satisfaction of Henry, as to be rewarded, on his return, with the chancellorship of the duchy of Lan-
1529. caster. ‡ Two years afterwards, we find him employed, in conjunction with his much esteemed friend, Tonstal, Bishop of Durham, to assist at the famous negociations at Cambray. The conditions

* The Life and Reign of Henry VIII., by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, edit. 1741, p. 112.

† "I do not like my office of Ambassador," says he merrily to Erasmus; "it doth not suit a married man thus to leave his family: it is much fitter for you ecclesiastics, *qui primum uxores ac liberos, aut domi non habetis, aut ubique reperitis.*" See Jortin, Vol. I. p. 89.

‡ More, p. 54.

of the treaty of Madrid, which Charles V. had hastily compelled Francis I. to sign, while he held him in captivity, having been found too dishonourable and pernicious to be executed; an attempt was made to prevent the renewal of hostilities between France and Spain. Accordingly, Louise, mother of the French king, and Margaret, aunt to the emperor, to whose mediation this important affair was entrusted, met at Cambray, and after many difficulties, came at length to an accommodation, which was greatly accelerated by the good offices of the English ambassadors. * Henry, who had some favourite purposes to serve by the conclusion of this treaty, was so much delighted with the part which More had acted, that he caused the Duke of Norfolk, on a public occasion, to express how much both himself and his kingdom were indebted to his able negociation. †

In public speeches.

As Latin was, in that age, the chief language for the intercourse not only of the learned, but of governments, the readiness and elegance with which it was spoken by More brought his services, on public occasions, into great request. Thus we find him replying, with much applause, in the name of Henry, at one time to the ambassador of France, ‡ at another to those studied harangues with which

* Herbert, p. 231. † Roper, p. 21. Hoddesdon, p. 42.
‡ Herbert, p. 152.

the universities were accustomed to receive the visits of their sovereign. * The ceremonious splendour of such occasions was ill suited to his taste, but he seems to have been by no means averse to displays of unpremeditated eloquence; for we are told, that when he came to any foreign university in the course of his embassies, he usually requested to be present at the public Latin disputations held in these seats of learning; and sometimes mixing in the contests which he had come to witness, astonished the audience by his fluency and learning. †

Opinion of Henry.

Henry meantime continued to show him new and still more flattering marks of esteem and friendship. Pleased to exchange the ceremonious splendour of a court for the charms of More's domestic society, the monarch would occasionally come, without any previous notice, to spend the day at Chelsea, and partake in the private entertainments of his minister. These tokens of royal favour were not, however, overvalued by More. He felt no elevation at being made subservient to the pleasures even of his sovereign; and he knew Henry's disposition too well not to be sensible that his attachment was the mere transient impulse of the moment. An anecdote strongly expressive of these sentiments is preserved. The king having one day paid him an unexpected visit to dinner, and having afterwards

* More, p. 60. Roper, p. 13. † More, p. 60.

walked with him for an hour in the garden, with his arm round his neck, Mr Roper, son-in-law to More, took occasion, after Henry was gone, to congratulate him on his rare good fortune, in being treated by the king with a degree of familiarity never experienced by any other subject. "I thank our Lord," replied More, "I find his Grace my very good lord indeed; and I believe he doth as singularly favour me as any subject in this realm. However, son Roper, I may tell thee, I have no cause to be proud thereof, for if my head would win him a castle in France, it would not fail to be struck off." *

Proposed divorce of Queen Catharine.

Yet More, while thus aware of the capricious and headlong violence of Henry, had already found himself obliged to dissent from him in a point where the passions of the monarch were deeply interested. Prince Arthur, his elder brother, had been married, at the early age of fifteen, to Catharine, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, but had died a few months after the celebration of his marriage. On this occasion, his father, in whom avarice was the supreme passion, unable to endure that the large dowry of Catharine, amounting to two hundred thousand ducats, should be carried back to Spain, procured a dispensation from the pope, and compelled his second son, Henry, to be

* Roper, p. 13.

affianced to the infanta. The prince, though only twelve years of age, is said to have been extremely averse to this unusual contract, but could not, at his early age, make any effectual resistance to the determined purpose of his father. On his accession to the throne, at the age of eighteen, as his marriage had not yet been celebrated, it was warmly debated in the council of state whether he ought to fulfil his early contract. It could scarcely be considered as binding upon him, since he had been forced into it in his nonage. The marriage was somewhat ineligible from the greater age of the lady, which exceeded his own by six years, and seriously objectionable, from her former union with his brother. On the other hand, her amiable disposition, her affection for Henry, her large dower, and the advantages of maintaining a close alliance with Spain, were strongly urged in favour of fulfilling the contract, and these considerations at length prevailed with the council.

Henry lived many years very happily with Catharine, and was much won by the unvaried sweetness of her temper; yet circumstances too often occurred to remind him of their unusual, and, as it was accounted, unnatural connection. The marriage of a brother with the widow of his brother, a union so repugnant to the customs of all Christian nations, and solemnly prohibited by a law founded on evident expediency, was looked upon with a de-

gree of horror; nor could the dispensation of the pope, now much less regarded than formerly, efface this general impression. Even Henry VII. himself, whose avarice had occasioned the contract, is said to have discovered an intention to take some favourable opportunity of having it annulled, * and on his deathbed to have charged his son not to complete a union so unusual, and repugnant to the laws of God and man. † Warham, the primate, a man of great learning and authority, had, with some others, openly declared against the resolution of the council, which approved the marriage; and similar sentiments had been avowed by foreign governments. A treaty being entered into for the espousal of Mary, the issue of this marriage, with the French king or the Duke of Orleans, the ambassador of that nation directly objected to the legitimacy of the princess, on account of the unprecedented relation of her parents. ‡ Even the Emperor Charles, although her cousin-germain, had attempted to evade a similar contract by the same objection. §

The impression made by these circumstances on Henry's mind, although slight at first, was in process of time greatly aggravated by various consider-

* Hume, from Morison's Apomaxis, p. 13.

† Hume, from ibid. Heylin's Queen Mary, p. 2. See also Herbert, p. 208.

‡ Herbert, p. 191. § Ibid.

ations. If Mary's legitimacy could be called in question, it was apprehended that the King of Scotland, the next heir, would, on the death of Henry, lay claim to the crown, and replunge the nation into those civil wars from which it had so lately emerged. His confessor, influenced by Wolsey, who had at that time some private purposes to serve by a dissolution of the marriage, contrived to infuse new doubts into his mind; and when he afterwards applied to his bishops for a solution of his scruples, he found them all, with the exception of Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, fully satisfied of the unlawfulness of the marriage. Heaven itself, indeed, seemed to him to have pronounced a similar sentence; for although Catharine had born him several children, yet they had all died in early infancy, except one daughter; a calamity which struck him the more, because the curse of being childless is the very threatening denounced in the law of Moses against those who marry a brother's widow. At the same time, the decay of the queen's beauty, and certain distempers which increased with her years, contributed, by diminishing the king's affection for her, to augment his scruples.*

But all his apprehensions of the illegitimacy of his marriage were converted into certainties, by the appearance at court of Anne Boleyn, a young

* Herbert, p. 194.

lady connected with the most noble families of the kingdom, yet far more distinguished by her beauty and accomplishments than by her rank. Having been appointed one of the queen's maids of honour, she was frequently in the company of Henry, and soon attracted his notice by the charms of her person, and the captivating vivacity of her conversation. The result of these interviews was a passion, which, in his warm temperament, quickly became predominant; and as he found her virtue proof against all licentious advances, he conceived an irresistible desire to gratify his wishes by raising her to the throne.* From this period, the reign-

* From the frequent murder or divorce of his wives, to make room for others, it has been strangely supposed that Henry entertained some scruples about concubinage, and that an aversion to libertinism at least may be accounted among his virtues. How far this opinion is well founded will appear from the following passage in the history of his life, which seems to have been overlooked by modern writers:—"One of the liberties which our king took at his spare time was to love. For as all recommendable parts concurred in his person, and they, again, were exalted in his high dignity and valour; so it must seem less strange, if, amid the many fair ladies which lived in his court, he both gave and received temptation. Among whom, because Elizabeth Blunt, daughter to Sir John Blunt, knight, was thought, for her rare ornaments of nature and education, to be the beauty and mistress-piece of her time, that entire affection passed betwixt them, as at late she bore him a son. This child proving so equally alike to both parents, that he became the best emblem of their mutual affection, was called Henry Fitzroy by the king, and so much avowed by him, that, having now attained the age of six years, he was made a knight publicly, and

ing object of his mind was to procure the dissolution of his marriage with Catharine. He applied to the pope to annul the dispensation which had been granted by his predecessor, a request with which Clement VII. who then held the apostolic chair, had many weighty reasons to comply; and although his terror of the emperor's displeasure made him invent many pretences to delay a final decision, yet his promises and professions led Henry to look with confidence to a favourable result.

While things continued in this undetermined state, the king, anxious that the opinion of his subjects should coincide with his in a point where their support might become indispensably necessary, exerted himself to gain over to his side the persons of most influence in the nation, and was especially

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the same day created Earl of Nottingham, Duke of Richmond and Somerset, and Lieutenant-General beyond the Trent, and Warden-General of the Borders of Scotland, and, shortly after, Admiral of England. After which he was first bred up together with Henry, Earl of Surrey, in the Castle of Windsor, which the earl elegantly describes in a sonnet extant in his works; from whence, November 1532, they went both together to study at Paris; which acquaintance and friendship was endeared again by a match of the said duke with Mary, the earl's sister, by whom he yet had no issue. Howbeit, I find he was very personable, and of great expectation, insomuch that he was thought, not only for ability of body, but mind, to be one of the rarest of his time; for which reason also, he was much cherished by our king, as also because he had no issue male by the queen, nor did, perchance, expect any." Herbert, p. 137.

solicitous that his divorce should have the sanction of More. The high estimation in which the talents, and still more the integrity of this minister, were held at home and abroad, rendered his voice of much importance. All felt that his penetration and judgment, experienced as he was in intricate discussions of law and theology, were not likely to be led astray; and all were convinced, that no opinion different from his real sentiments could be drawn from him either by fear or complaisance. But, in the present instance, his decision was by no means favourable to the views of the monarch. He probably looked on the laws prohibiting marriage between near degrees of kindred as founded merely on expediency, and capable of being laid aside, without moral turpitude, when interfering with the welfare of nations, or the security of governments; and he seems to have thought that the pope, whose power he accounted extremely salutary in regulating the affairs of religion and morality, was fully competent to authorize this departure. At the same time, he foresaw many great evils which might ensue from the king's divorce. To an amiable and meritorious queen, the loss of her husband and her throne was an act of cruel injustice; and while her daughter suffered no less severely from the deprivation of her rights of succession, her disputed title (for many could never be brought to acquiesce in the proposed measure)

The opinion of More, contrary to the king's wish.

would scarcely fail at some future period to throw the nation again into civil convulsions. Nor was it only at home that the country was likely to suffer from the prosecution of the divorce; the emperor, then the most powerful prince in Europe, would probably avenge the degradation of his aunt by open hostilities.

From a mature consideration of these circumstances, the opinion which More formed was decidedly in favour of the legitimacy of the marriage, and the impropriety of a divorce; nor could Henry, either by private conversations, or by the assistance of able men, prevail on him to alter his sentiments. Yet he listened to their arguments with so much attention, replied to them with so much calmness, and maintained his dissent with such unaffected mildness, that even the impetuous and violent Henry was mortified without being displeased at his want of success. More entreated the king to consider his refusal to sanction the marriage as proceeding from conviction, and not from any want of inclination to promote the pleasure of his sovereign. If he abandoned his integrity to serve an occasion, he should be unworthy of the confidence with which he was honoured; that, however, he by no means considered his own opinion as the standard of truth, or to be depended on in opposition to those of so many wise and learned men; and that his Majesty would readily

find, among his other counsellors, persons whose sentiments coincided with his views, and who were better qualified, by their opinions and influence, to promote them. Henry, moved by the candour and moderation of this address, declared that More should retain his opinions unmolested, and, although not permittted, by his conviction, to serve him on this occasion, should continue to enjoy his favour unabated. *

The delays which the pope studiously interposed, to prevent the question of the divorce from being brought to a decision, at length ruined the credit of Wolsey, whom the king had entrusted with the conduct of this affair. The high opinion of his abilities, with which this favourite had inspired the monarch, made Henry attribute his present failure to want rather of inclination than of power; and the influence of Anne Boleyn, who looked upon him as her principal enemy, precipitated his fall. He was stript of his offices and wealth; and after a career of authority and grandeur almost too great for a subject, was made to feel how worthless are the highest honours which depend on the caprice of an arbitrary prince.

About this time More, having acted his part in the negociations at Cambray so much to the king's satisfaction, had returned to court; and Henry

Created Chancellor

* Roper, p. 28.

having now, by the fall of Wolsey, the chancellor-
October 25, 1529. ship at his disposal, gladly seized the opportunity of conferring that high office on More. No appointment could have been more popular, since no one stood so high in the public opinion for integrity, industry, and experience, both in legal and political business. To More, it was the more honourable, that it had for several reigns been conferred exclusively on dignified ecclesiastics; and the few instances in which, in the course of our history, it had been given to laymen, were now almost wholly forgotten. That nothing might be omitted which could do honour to the new chancellor, the Duke of Norfolk, at his installation, delivered, by the king's command, an oration, which, after displaying the eminent services of More, concludes with the following words, so remarkable to be dictated by an arbitrary sovereign, and spoken by the first peer of his realm: "It may, perhaps, seem to many a strange and unusual matter, that this dignity should be bestowed upon a layman, none of the nobility, and one that hath wife and children, because heretofore but singular learned prelates, or men of greatest nobility, have possessed the place: But what is wanting in these respects, the admirable virtue, the matchless gifts of wit and wisdom of this man, doth most fully recompense. For the king's majesty hath not regarded how great, but what a man he was; he hath cast

his eyes not on the nobility of his blood, but on the worth of his person; he hath respected his sufficiency, not his profession; finally, he would shew by this choice, that he hath some rare subjects among the row of gentlemen and laymen, who deserve to manage the highest offices in the realm, which bishops and nobles think they only can deserve." *

But this elevation, however honourable, was far from agreeable to More. He felt that, while the height to which he was now raised must necessarily render him more obnoxious to Henry's caprice, it was no longer in his power to avoid the storm, by withholding his opinion. His duty, he was aware, would soon call on him to dissent openly from a measure, to which he saw the king more vehemently impelled; and we have already seen the consequences which his knowledge of Henry's character led him in such an event to expect. But as the imperfect reasons which he could venture to state, for declining the office, produced no impression on the king, and his acceptance of it was unavoidable; he seems to have resolved, as the only course by which he could reconcile public usefulness with personal safety, to devote himself assiduously to his duties as a judge, and to interfere as little as possible in affairs of state. For though the chancellor-

* Roper, p. 22. Hoddesdon, p. 47.

ship was considered the highest civil station in the kingdom, and he, who occupied it, as the prime minister, or principal adviser of his sovereign; yet there were various circumstances which, at that period, enabled its possessor to withdraw, in a considerable degree, from public transactions. There existed then no such character as that of a minister, regularly responsible for the acts of government, and supposed, in virtue of his office, to direct all the principal measures adopted under his administration. The king might, at that period, have been called his own prime minister; the measures of his government flowed not only nominally, but really from himself; and the business of his ministers was either to execute his orders, or assist him with their advice when he thought proper to require it. Sometimes an individual, by his superior talents, and much more frequently by artifice, acquired such an ascendancy over the mind of his sovereign, that he was enabled, like Wolsey, to order the affairs of government at his pleasure. But as this exercise of authority was not in virtue of any regular office, he was often thwarted in his views, often obliged to acquiesce in measures undertaken in opposition to his sentiments; nor was he considered as in any degree responsible to parliament for acts which he was not deemed able to control. A disgraced minister was often prosecuted before that assembly for the transactions of his

Ministerial functions in that age.

administration; but this, far from an act of public justice, was merely a display of royal vengeance against a person who had incurred the king's displeasure. If the ruin of the victim was once resolved on, innocence was no protection: he was prosecuted for measures which the king had dictated, and both Houses of Parliament had sanctioned, as well as for those which could be justly ascribed to himself.

But while the king took so great a share in the direction of the state, the affairs of government were far less important and complicated than in later times. Even the foreign transactions, although the principal business of state, required no very constant nor eminent exertion of talent. The politicians of Italy were, indeed, already busied in adjusting a balance of power; and while all the courts of Europe were filled with intrigues to confirm or counteract these arrangements, Henry boasted, that, as France and Spain divided the power of the Continent between them, England had the glory of holding the balance. But if the scales continued to maintain their equipoise, it was to be attributed to very different causes from the discretion of the umpire, who was ready to throw his weight into either, according to the views, the passion, or the caprice of the moment. Such was the poverty and internal disunion of those extensive empires, that they could not bring into the field,

far less maintain for a considerable time, a sufficient body of troops to produce material injury to each other; and England, by joining with either, was more than secure against the adverse power.

The other departments of the executive government, divided at present among so many principal officers of state, were then of little comparative importance. While an army was merely a temporary levy, raised in haste by some crude and violent methods which custom had sanctioned, a navy was chiefly a collection of vessels hired or impressed into the service of government for some particular attempt, and manned almost wholly with soldiers. The arduous business of taxation was then unknown: the ordinary revenues of the king were derived from his own demesnes, from certain feudal fines, or from a few ancient imposts; his extraordinary expences were defrayed by contributions imposed by Parliament, and levied after a certain customary form.* To regulate the ceremonial of the court, to superintend the police, and to ward against plots or insurrections, were in those days the chief duties of ministers; for the vast business of colonies formed as yet no part of the cares of administration.

In such a state of things, government could

* These forms were denominated subsidies, tenths, fifteenths, &c.

be conducted even by a hot-headed arbitrary prince, without much interference from experienced ministers; and the situation of public affairs was now peculiarly free from difficulties. The Continent had been restored to peace; the nation enjoyed perfect tranquillity at home; Henry, having abandoned his early predilection for expensive armaments, was not in particular want of money; his attention was diverted from all schemes of ambition, and his mind wholly occupied with the business of his divorce, and the charms of Anne Boleyn.

Enabled by all these circumstances to turn his thoughts without distraction to the legal duties of his office, More soon drew on himself the admiration of his countrymen. Wolsey had presided in the Court of Chancery with much ability, and, as far as regarded himself, with unimpeached integrity; but as he had a pitiful ambition to efface from the minds of men all recollection of his origin, by the excess of his pomp and arrogance, it was hardly possible for a person of common rank to procure admittance to his presence without bribes to his attendants. The suitors in Chancery were thus deprived of their rights, or plundered of their money, scarcely less than if the judge had administered justice to those only who could win him by bribes, or awe him by their rank. The conduct of More was in every thing, except integrity, the

very reverse of Wolsey's. Resolved that no man who had been wronged should have to purchase justice, and that the poor and helpless, who stood most in need of the protection of the laws, should not be defrauded of their rights, he took precautions that every one should have direct and immediate access to his court; and in proportion as a suitor was poorer, meaner, or more unprotected, he was received with more affability, his business heard with more attention, and dispatched with more readiness. Aware, however, that even this demeanour was not sufficient to ensure justice to all; that the expence of solicitors, and the necessary writings, as well as the regular fees of office, frequently deterred men from prosecuting a just claim; and that the suits *in forma pauperis*, which had lately been granted,* were but very lamely supported, it was his custom to sit every afternoon in his open hall, where every one who had any suit to prefer was allowed to come without any form or writing whatever, and explain his claims in person.†

Although he thus brought on himself a load of causes, which he might have avoided by rendering his court more difficult of access, such was his indefatigable diligence, that he proceeded rapidly in clearing away the arrears of his predecessors. On

* By 11 H. VII. cap. 12. † Roper, p. 21.

his appointment to the chancellorship, he had found his court encumbered by a vast accumulation of suits, some of which had been there near twenty years; yet he had held the office only two years, when, on determining a certain cause, and calling for the next to be heard, he was answered that there was not one more depending. This circumstance, which had perhaps never occurred before since the institution of the court, he caused to be entered on record. *

Dispute with the judges;

The most unpleasant and invidious part of his labours was to remedy the abuses of the courts of common law, from whose judgments relief was continually prayed. Though he granted no injunction, and allowed no subpœna to be issued, till he had carefully examined the bill, his interferences, in these days of partial decisions, became so frequent, as at length to excite the complaints of the judges. Informed of their dissatisfaction, he requested their attendance at a conference; and, producing a list of all the injunctions which he had ever issued, as well as the reasons which had influenced him to interpose, he desired them to point out the instances in which he had improperly interfered. A perusal of this document having,

* Augustus, after a lapse of some hundred years, closed the Temple of Janus for the second time: Shall posterity have to wait as long for a legal Augustus to give a second clearance to our Court of Chancery?

however, convinced them that their complaints were as unfounded as their sentences had been unjustifiable, he assured them, that no office could be more ungrateful to him than to interfere with their judgments, and, as a proof of his sincerity, promised to desist entirely, provided they would engage to exert their own authority in remedying these abuses. But they having, as More indignantly observed, their own purposes to serve in directing such judgments, while they were secured, by the verdict of a jury, from all responsibility, declined this equitable proposal. *

Integrity; The inflexible integrity and disinterestedness of More became proverbial; for while he would allow none of his friends, or the officers of his court, to burden the suitors by receiving presents, no hopes or fears, or even the affections of kindred and friendship, were ever known to bias his judgment. An instance is mentioned, in which he made a decree directly against one of his sons-in-law, who, trusting to the favour of so near a relative, had refused to submit his cause to arbitration. † Another of his sons-in-law having, between jest and earnest, complained that he did not allow his friends to make any profit under him; not that he, for his part, would be guilty of perverting justice, but that

* Roper, p. 24, 25. Hoddesdon, p. 57.

† Roper, p. 24.

he saw no harm in receiving a small present for speaking in behalf of suitors: More applauded the scrupulousness of his conscience, and told him that he should endeavour to provide for him otherwise; "for this one thing I assure you," said he, "that if the parties will call for justice at my hands, then, though it were my father, whom I love so dearly, stood on one side, and the devil stood on the other, his cause being just, the devil of me should have his due." * "For your sake," he would say to his children, "I will do justice to all men, and leave you a blessing." †

His disinterestedness;

The disinterestedness of More was no less conspicuous as a courtier than as a judge. The mere salary of his office was all that he enjoyed from the public; and although he stood so high in the favour of his prince, that nothing would have been refused him, yet he could, after his retirement, declare, that he had never asked one penny for himself or his friends. ‡ His few requests to the king were chiefly in favour of those engaged in literature and the fine arts, who could not, without the assistance of patronage, continue those pursuits which were to reflect lustre on their age. Among others who shared his protection was Holbein, the celebrated painter. This artist, who was a native

Patronage of the arts;

* Roper, p. 23. Hoddesdon, p. 56.

† Lives of the Lords Chancellors, Vol. I. p. 71. ‡ Roper, p. 15.

of Swisserland, having come over to England recommended to More by Erasmus, experienced a most flattering reception from the chancellor, who was warmly attached to the fine arts, and still more to Erasmus.* He kept Holbein upwards of two years in his own house, gave him encouragement to paint many beautiful pictures, of which some are preserved to the present times; and even found means to attract towards him the king's particular attention. Having, with this view, hung up all the artist's pieces in his great hall, disposed in the best order, and placed in the most favourable light, he invited Henry to an entertainment. The king, on entering the hall, was greatly struck with this display of painting; and when he inquired eagerly whether such an artist was now alive, and to be had for money, More embraced this opportunity of presenting Holbein to his Majesty. Henry immediately took him into his service, and soon brought him into high reputation and employment among persons of distinction. †

* Erasmus made a present of his picture to More, and sent it over by Holbein, who had painted it. More sent Erasmus, in return, a groupe, including himself and his whole family, by the same artist. Jortin's Life of Erasmus, Vol. I. p. 489.

† Among the numerous works of this celebrated artist, none, perhaps, are more noted than the groupes of Sir Thomas More's family; but very good reasons have been assigned for supposing, that though the heads were sketched by Holbein, the pictures were finished by an inferior artist. Anecdotes of Painting, Vol. I. p. 85.

But while More was thus displaying, in his exalted station, the same virtues which he had exhibited in a private condition, he became unfortunately involved in the theological controversies of the times, and, by the part which he bore in them, sullied that fame on which even envy could fix no other stain. We have seen that his religious creed made an early and deep impression on his mind; that even the most liberal studies were unable to shake his veneration for many superstitious observances; and that he was prevented, chiefly by diffidence in his own virtue, from devoting his life to the severities of a monastic order. But although he pursued a lay profession, he had all the devotion of an exemplary priest. His ordinary conversation was indeed lively and full of humour; but he would occasionally, with a solemnity the more impressive from its contrast with his usual cheerfulness, remind his family of the duties they owed to their Creator, of the uncertainty of human life, the vanity of earthly pleasures, and the improvement of affliction.* His attachment to religion, and its services was open and avowed; and, while he constantly attended divine service at his parish church

Religious controversies;

The most noted of these pictures is at Burford, in Oxfordshire, the seat of the Lenthalls; another was purchased by Sir Rowland Wynne, who carried it to his seat in Yorkshire. Lyson's Environs of London, Vol. II. p. 81.

* Roper, p. 16.

of Chelsea, he often assisted in its celebration. The Duke of Norfolk coming one day to dine with him, found him at church, dressed in a surplice, and singing with the choir: "How!" said his Grace, as they returned from worship, "my lord chancellor a parish clerk! you dishonour the king and his office." "Nay," replied More, "think not your master and mine dishonoured by my serving God, his master."* Even when engaged in the utmost hurry of private or public business, it was his constant custom, when at home, to read the psalms and litany with his wife and children: and, in the evening, to go with his whole family into his chapel, where the psalms and collects were devoutly rehearsed.† In this chapel, which he had erected at a short distance from his house, with a gallery and library, he sometimes sequestered himself even from his own family, and gave his mind wholly up to serious meditation. There were few days on which he did not here spend an interval in study and devotion, and the whole of Friday he anxiously sought thus to appropriate in solitude.‡

Yet was his piety cheerful and unaffected, free from all moroseness, and perfectly uncontaminated with ostentation. When his mind had become expanded by the cultivation of literature, and by a

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* Roper, p. 29. Hoddesdon, p. 66. More, p. 17
† Stapleton, p. 248. ‡ Roper, p 15

more extensive knowledge of mankind, his religious sentiments seem to have been remarkable for their liberality.* He represents it as an inviolable maxim with his Utopians, that no man ought to be punished for his religion: and while every one was allowed to believe, without inquiry or molestation, whatever his own understanding approved, he was prohibited, not only from committing injury or insult towards those of a different creed, but even from attempting to make proselytes by any other means than the most gentle persuasion. To accommodate the public worship to these liberal institutions, every form and prayer in his imaginary republic was conceived in such a manner, that no one who believed in the existence of a God could scruple to join in it. No images were admitted into their temples, no adoration paid there unless to God alone; and while the members of every sect were allowed to perform their peculiar ceremonies without control, in their own private houses, they were prevented from disturbing the general harmony, by obtruding them on the public attention.† As to the establishment and authority of the priest-

* Picus of Mirandola, whom he so much admired, was distinguished for the freedom of his religious opinions. He was, during his whole lifetime, persecuted by the devotees of Rome, with charges of heresy, and perhaps saved from their hands only by his rank.

† Utopia, lib. ii.

hood, the institutions of the Utopians were more distant from the Romish church than those of Luther, or even than those of Calvin; since the clergy were chosen by the people, and invested with no further power than to exclude the desperately wicked from joining in the public worship.

Were we, indeed, to judge of More from the sentiments which he delivers in the Utopia, we might consider him as a reformer, both of religious creeds and of church government, whose plans were too liberal to be carried into execution. In comparing the institutions of Utopia with those of Christendom, he omits no opportunity to render the Romish priesthood the butt of his humour. He takes occasion to compliment the activity of those *holy men* the abbots, who are not content with living at their ease, and doing no good, but must needs do positive mischief. He introduces Cardinal Morton's jester laying plans for clearing the nation of idleness and beggary. As the most appropriate receptacle, the male beggars are to be distributed among the Benedictines, as lay-brothers, and the females are to become nuns; while he considers the friars as provided for by a statute which enacts, that all vagabonds should be taken up and put to hard labour.* So ridiculous is the view he exhibits of the folly, ill-breeding, and ma-

* Utopia, p. 87.

lice of these friars, that the publishers of the Utopia took care to strike the passage out of some later editions. * As to the whole body of preachers, he makes no scruple of charging them with practising upon the Christian doctrine, and accommodating it to their own lives, since they could not bring their lives to correspond with its precepts. Even the heads of the church do not escape his sarcasms. Ascribing the great respect paid to treaties in modern Europe to the good example set by the popes to other princes, he ironically panegyrises the perfidious Alexander VI. and Julius II. for their religious observance of good faith.

Nor is it only in his Utopia that we find these free strictures. His letters to Erasmus and his other friends abound with invectives against the vices of the monks, and the corruptions introduced both into the doctrines and the government of the Christian church.

But although More could entertain such liberal sentiments of religion, he does not appear to have formed any systematic ideas of a thorough reformation; and with whatever detestation he looked on the vices of the priesthood, and the corruptions of the Christian faith, he seems not to have been aware how extensive and radical a change was required for their correction. He could endure

* Burnet, Hist. of Ref. III. 29.

the keen raillery and pointed sarcasms of Erasmus, and heartily join in the laugh against the clergy; but when Luther, disdaining these slow and indirect modes of attack, boldly stood forward to arraign not only the vices but the pretensions of the church of Rome, rousing his followers to throw off her yoke, and oppose, by every power of mind and body, whatever their consciences could not approve, the daring nature of these measures, and the consequences which ensued, seem to have given too violent a shock to the prejudices of More. He could ridicule the coarse fictions of the priesthood, and the absurd importance attached to external observances; but it was too much to see every article of his early creed outraged, and all the rites, which had been consecrated to him by habit, ignominiously trampled under foot. Averse, besides, both from feeling and principle, to war and violence of every description, he was taught, by the recent miseries of his own country, to look with horror on those struggles which result from civil convulsions. But, in the consequences of Luther's doctrines he could anticipate only one vast scene of confusion and bloodshed. While, on the one hand, the Roman hierarchy, strong by her wealth and splendour, and still stronger by the hold which habitual veneration had given her on the minds of men, was resolutely determined to employ the arm of authority in defence of her power and pre-

tensions, the reformed, on the other hand, seemed resolved to shake this mighty fabric to the foundation, and to assert their religious liberty at the price of their blood. The violent commotions that had already taken place in Germany seemed the prelude to a universal and dreadful conflict. *

Nor was the conduct of some among the reformed calculated to attain the approbation of the moderate and pious. While the well-informed and virtuous behaved as became the happy partakers of so great an amelioration, a portion of the multitude, on throwing off the trammels of the Romish creed, seemed to wanton in the licence and extravagance of their religious opinions. The minds of men, escaped from the galling yoke of superstition and despotism, and wild with the possession of a new and imperfectly understood liberty, were apt to run into the opposite extreme of unbounded licentiousness. Some proposed to give up the Christian faith entirely, and to raise their creed on the broad foundations of deism: † others, while they pretended to continue among the followers of

* The following passage from a letter of More to Erasmus plainly shows, that the convulsions he apprehended from their innovations were the principal cause of his hatred to heretics:—"Nam omnino sic illud genus hominum odi, ut illis, nisi resipiscunt, tam invisus esse velim, quam cui maxime, quippe quos indies magis et magis experior tales, ut *mundo ab illis vehementer metuam.*" Ep. 466.

† Herbert, p. 238.

Christ, insulted his religion by notions which outraged the human understanding. To some it did not appear enough to cast off the authority of the church of Rome, to inquire and think freely for themselves, and to assert their civil, in conjunction with their religious liberty; they were ready to call in question all authority, however necessary for the security of society, to own no law but the guidance of their own caprice, no obligation but the impulse of their own desires. They began even to announce a commission from heaven to make proselytes by the sword. Such were the frantic tenets of Muncer and his followers, which afterwards led to the enormities of the Anabaptists at Munster.*

More was unable to view these excesses with the steady eye of an enlightened philosopher. Not aware that they were the necessary attendants of a revolution in the opinions of men, which would lead to the most important advantages, he did not perceive that society could not, without many temporary convulsions, recoil from the unnatural state into which it had been forcibly bent by ignorance and imposture. As the communication of

* The mad tenets and flagitious conduct of a portion of this sect, at that period, appear to have had a powerful effect in exciting the opposition of More to the Reformation. See a letter to Cochleus in Stapleton, p. 209.

knowledge was studiously discouraged both by the church and state, it required a violent effort even to assert the right of procuring instruction; and a further period of ignorance and error had necessarily to elapse, before men could avail themselves of the knowledge thus painfully acquired. Impressed more forcibly by the immediate disasters of the Reformation than by the incalculable advantages which it was preparing for future ages, More could not discern the fruits of that literature, which he himself had so successfully laboured to disseminate. Even Erasmus, the great restorer of learning, feared more than he hoped from the Reformation, and, like More, was unable to rise to the energy of Luther's mind.

Instead of looking forward to the success of the reformers for the termination of those convulsions with which the Christian world was threatened, More could see no safety but in stopping their progress. Imagining that a full acknowledgment of the authority of the clergy, and a unanimous submission to the decisions of the pope, were the most likely means to restore tranquillity, he looked to the suppression of heresy, as the first and most urgent care; while, miscalculating the obstinacy of the priesthood, he trusted that the abuses of the church might, in a period of general quiet, be corrected without exciting convulsions. Impressed with these sentiments, and connected with

the leading adherents of popery in England, it was impossible for him, in the present circumstances, to remain a silent spectator. Luther and his followers having begun to avail themselves, with much industry, of the assistance of the press in propagating their opinions, and having evidently a great advantage in argument and eloquence over their opponents, the literary acquirements of More pointed out to him the task of replying to their representations, as the most effectual manner in which he could serve the cause of the church.* But his theological knowledge was by no means equal to his eloquence. He was imperfectly acquainted with the history of the church; † and although sufficiently versed in some of the fathers, and in the questions of scholastic divinity, he had never searched, with the keen eye of an inquirer, to the foundation of his religious opinions. Proving, with these disadvantages, a very unequal match for Luther and the other reformed divines, who had made the most profound researches into the subjects in dispute, he had recourse to the usual practice of controversialists, who find themselves beset by arguments which they know not how to answer: He grew angry where he should have begun to doubt, and endeavoured to hide the defects of his

* Stapleton, p. 189.

† Burnet, Hist of Reform. edit. 1715. Vol. I. p. 155.

reasoning in the confidence of his assertions, and the virulence of his abuse. The scurrility of his controversial tracts exceeded even the usual coarseness of that age; and it was said, that they ought to have procured him only the reputation of having the best knack of any man in Europe at calling bad names in good Latin.* The easy and natural flow of his style, a perpetual succession of humorous allusions, joined to a happy art of placing his own opinions in the fairest light, and of holding up those of his adversary to ridicule, were, however, sufficient to render his tracts extremely popular.

His persecution of the Protestants.

But while his mind was thus heated with controversy, and his passions excited by the applause of the Catholics on the one hand, and the abuse of the Protestants on the other, the power placed in his hands as Lord Chancellor, unfortunately afforded him an opportunity of displaying his zeal otherwise than by polemical writings. It is said to have been at his instigation that the king at length put in force those laws against heretics, of which Wolsey, either from hatred to the clergy, or from a better motive, had retarded the execution.† As the Lord Chancellor presided in the court of the Star Chamber, before which those accused of here-

* Atterbury's Considerations upon the Spirit of Martin Luther.

† Burnet, Hist. of Ref. Vol. I. p. 153, from Fox.

sy were then often brought, More had, in his official capacity, an opportunity of exercising much severity against the favourers of the Reformation. James Bainham, a gentleman of the Temple, was carried to the Chancellor's house, where much pains were taken to persuade him to discover such of his fellow Templars as inclined to the new opinions; but fair means not prevailing, More is said to have made him be whipt in his presence, and afterwards conveyed to the Tower, where, it has been said, he looked on and saw him put to the rack. * Various other cruelties were charged upon him by the Protestants, and he was in consequence considered as a principal persecutor.

Of these accusations some were denied by More; and his integrity can allow us to entertain no scruple in receiving his testimony; yet many of the severities which he committed against the reformed can neither be disputed nor palliated. We have only to regret the darkness in which superstition may envelope the clearest understanding; to lament the obstinacy with which the best men may cling to prejudices which early and inveterate habits have rendered sacred in their eyes; to deplore the excesses into which even the most generous dispositions may be hurried, if they once engage in controversies where opposition and sarcasm sting

* Burnet, Hist. of Ref. Vol. I. p. 158, from Fox.

their feelings and goad their passions. When these causes could impel even More to sanguinary cruelties, what tragedies may they not be expected to produce? In him a natural mildness had been improved by enlightened studies, and confirmed by deliberate habits of complacency and forbearance. In regard to religious liberty, he had at one time expressed ideas not only far beyond the age in which he lived, but even more liberal than may still be thought consistent with practice. He would have no man persecuted, or in any way molested for his religious opinions; he would even have nothing introduced into the national worship, by which any man's understanding or prejudices could be shocked; while, at the same time, every one was permitted to hold whatever opinions, and to perform whatever ceremonies, he pleased, in company with those of his own persuasion.* Such were once the sentiments of More; and yet even this man could, by a fatal gradation, become a religious persecutor.

Disinterested zeal.

But while we censure his conduct, we must respect the purity of his motives. Neither the love of power, or fame, or affluence, had any share in urging him to the support of the Catholic religion, or the persecution of the reformed; all that he did was from mistaken principle. Several inci-

* See Utopia.

dents are related which place in a striking point of view his disinterestedness, and the benefits which he anticipated from the extirpation of heresy. As he walked one day with his son-in-law, Mr Roper, by the river at Chelsea, and discoursed very seriously on the state of public affairs, he suddenly pointed to the water, and said, with much earnestness, that, on condition that three things were well accomplished, he would to God he were presently thrown into the Thames! Roper, surprised at this strong expression, and the unusual eagerness of his manner, requested to know the objects which he so earnestly desired. "The first," said More, "is, that whereas the greatest part of Christian princes are now at mortal war, they were at universal peace. The second, that whereas the church of Christ is at this time grievously afflicted with many errors and heresies, it were settled in a perfect uniformity of religion. The third is, that whereas the king's marriage is now brought in question, it were to the glory of God, and the satisfaction of all parties, well concluded." * From these words we perceive the strong aversion which he entertained to all dissensions that might interrupt the harmony of society, and subject mankind to new calamities. Unhappily he numbered in this class those noble struggles for freedom of opinion, which,

* Roper, p. 14.

in violent but temporary agitation, lay the basis of permanent tranquillity.

Another anecdote shows the disinterestedness of his religious zeal. His treatises in defence of the Romish church were thought to have done essential service to the cause; and as it was known that he had taken no advantage of the opportunities afforded by his high office to amass wealth, the clergy in convocation resolved, as a mark of their gratitude, to present him with a gift of four or five thousand pounds, a sum equal to more than twenty thousand in our times. To show him every possible mark of respect, three bishops, among whom was his particular friend, Tonstall, Bishop of Durham, were deputed to wait upon him in the name of the whole body, and to request his acceptance of this testimony of their gratitude. More expressed his satisfaction that his labours were approved by so many wise and learned men; but he absolutely refused their present, declaring that he would never accept of any reward for his religious writings but at the hands of God. With the same constancy he rejected the entreaties of the prelates, that he would permit them to offer the present to his family. "So much," said he, "do I value my pleasure above my profit, that I would not, for a much larger sum, have lost the rest of so many nights as were spent upon these writings. Yet notwithstanding, upon condition that all heresies

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were suppressed, I would that all my books were burnt, and my labour entirely lost." *

Difficulties relative to the Divorce.

But while More continued to execute the office of Chancellor with so much honour to himself, unless where religion was concerned, and even there, with the approbation of his own conscience, Henry's impatience for the completion of his divorce became every day more urgent. Finding the court of Rome resolved to put off the decision of his suit as long as possible, without any assurance that the ultimate verdict would be favourable to his wishes, he began to look around for some other authority to justify that course to which he was impelled by his passions. At the suggestion of Cranmer, afterwards Primate of England, he sent to consult the learned in the most celebrated seats of literature throughout Europe, on the question of his marriage with Catharine; and several of the foreign universities, more impressed with the criminality of the connection, than with the dispensing power of the pope, gave their verdict, without hesitation, against its legality. Oxford and Cambridge, though withheld for a time by their apprehensions of the consequences to the Catholic religion, were at length brought to concur in the same decision.

Fortified by these authorities, and by the gene-

* Roper, p. 26.

ral consent of his people, who now began very strongly to favour the Reformation, Henry proceeded to discover symptoms of an intention to shake off the control of the papal court. He refused to appear either in person or by proxy before the papal tribunal, whither his cause had been evoked, and would not even admit of a citation, which he now affected to consider as a heinous insult, and a violation of his prerogative. In the Parliament and convocation which met in the year 1531, measures were taken to abridge the authority of the pope in England. A confession was extorted from the convocation, that the king was the protector and supreme head of the church of England, although the partizans of the pope dexterously procured the insertion of a clause, declaring, that this was "*only* in so far as is permitted by the law of Christ." The Parliament, particularly the Commons, proceeding, on their part, with great alacrity to abridge the revenues of the Holy See, invested the king with a discretionary power either to prohibit or permit the pope to levy the *annates*, or first fruits, a tax which consisted in a year's rent of all the bishoprics that fell vacant, and which yielded considerable sums to the exchequer of Rome. It was also voted, that no regard should be paid to any censures which, in consequence of this act, might be issued by the court of Rome. The Commons next preferred to

the king, in his quality of Supreme Head of the Church, a long catalogue of complaints against the oppresssions and abuses of the ecclesiastic courts; and it was only by some accidental circumstances that they were prevented from applying very expeditious remedies to those evils.

More was at no loss to foresee the consequences of these decided proceedings. The authority of the pope, to the complete establishment of which he had looked as the only means of restoring the Christian world to tranquillity, was about to be shaken off; the king's divorce, for which this change was intended to pave the way, could not be long deferred; and he personally must be ere long called on, in his official capacity, to take a part in these measures. He had already been under the necessity of bringing forward the business of the divorce in Parliament, and of explaining the king's motives and intentions;* he had, on this occasion, strictly refrained from giving any indication of his own opinion, but he could not reconcile this ambiguous conduct to his sense of duty. Though his conviction remained unaltered, he had resolved to make no opposition to the measures which the king and the nation might be inclined to pursue, with regard to either the divorce or the supremacy. Yet while he was only anxious

* Roper, p. 29. Herbert, p. 235 and 256.

to bury his opinions in his own breast, he knew, that, in his official station, even silence would be construed into disapprobation. As the only means, therefore, by which he could at once preserve his integrity, and present no obstruction to the intended measures, he earnestly tendered his resignation to the king. To this request Henry could at first by no means be prevailed on to listen. He had, indeed, been much mortified that he could not bring More to the decision which he desired, and had often importuned him to reconsider the legality of his marriage. But though he found the chancellor immoveably fixed in his original opinion, such was the attachment with which the amiable qualities of his minister had inspired him, and such the respect which he entertained for his talents and integrity, that he bore this inflexibility without any apparent displeasure. Every new overture of this sort ended in new declarations on the part of Henry, that he would continue to accept his services on his own terms, that nothing should diminish his favour for him, and that he would no more molest his conscience by importunities. *

* Stapleton, p. 293. Macp. 116. So complete was Henry's persuasion that More would go every length in his favour which integrity would permit, that he once proposed him to the court of Rome as one of four arbitrators to whom the whole cause should be submitted. Of the other three the Archbishop of Canterbury was to be one, and the remaining two persons named by the emperor and the French king. Herbert, p. 269.

Resignation of the chancellorship, 1532.

It was, therefore, not till after repeated solicitations, and the intercession of the Duke of Norfolk, who was then in high favour at court, that More procured the acceptance of his resignation. He quitted power with the warmest applauses of his sovereign; * Henry expatiated on the meritorious manner in which he had discharged his important trust, declared himself and his kingdom debtors for many and great services, and assured him, that he should ever find a ready compliance with any requests which his private interests might induce him to make. These expressions were unusually gracious from Henry to a minister who had refused compliance with his will; yet when we consider that he was aware of the sacrifice which More had made in quitting a lucrative profession to gratify his sovereign's wishes, and of that disinterestedness which had ever prevented him from making a request for his private benefit, we cannot much admire the generosity of the prince who could allow such a minister to depart into retirement, without a provision for his future support.

Poverty.

We have seen the picture of domestic happiness which More's family exhibited previous to his accepting office, and the reluctance with which he

* Roper, p. 29. More, p. 186.

sacrificed these enjoyments to the pleasure of his sovereign. We might hence be led to conclude that, in resigning his high station, he only freed himself from unwelcome cares; and that, in the bosom of his family, he would again find those comforts and endearments, for which public distinctions formed, in his eyes, a very inadequate compensation. Such was, indeed, the case, if we might judge from the pleasantry with which he announced his resignation to his family, and that flow of gaiety and humour which it rather increased, than diminished. But the situation of his domestic affairs was greatly altered. Previous to his engaging in the king's service, the returns of a lucrative profession enabled him to live in considerable splendour; to retain around him, and in his house, his daughters, their husbands, and their children; and to attract, by his hospitality, a number of learned and ingenious friends. The offices which he afterwards held enabled him to continue this style of living; but as he made no undue profits by them, nor employed his influence with the king to procure any additional grants, his bare salary was unequal to the expences entailed on him by his situation; and his private fortune, which his liberality had never allowed greatly to accumulate, instead of being augmented by his public employments, was considerably impaired. On looking into his private affairs after his resignation, he found them

in a very reduced condition. His yearly income, derived from some property in land, did not exceed a hundred pounds; * while the payment of his debts almost entirely exhausted his money and valuable effects. † As he could not, after having held the highest legal station in the kingdom, retrace his steps to wealth by resorting again to his profession, he was under the necessity of making such retrenchments as would adapt his expences to his fortune. He dismissed his whole train of retainers and state servants; but with that affectionate concern which overlooked no one around him, he procured, for them all, suitable appointments in families of distinction. He gave his great barge to Sir Thomas Audley, his successor in the chancellorship, with whom he placed his eight watermen; and his fool or jester, the distinguishing appendage of high rank in those days, he presented to the Lord Mayor of London, and his successors in office. ‡

But while the loss of such idle symbols of greatness could not occasion even a transient sensation

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* Herbert, p. 270.

† His son-in-law, Mr Roper, informs us that, after the payment of his debts, the whole of More's property in gold and silver (paper obligations were not then known) did not, with the exception of his gold chain, the appendage of his rank, exceed the value of one hundred pounds.

‡ Roper, p. 30. More, p. 187.

of regret to one who had ever looked on them with indifference, the reduced state of his fortune compelled him to a sacrifice which could not but wound his heart. Unable any longer to provide for his daughters and their families, he was under the painful necessity of dismissing them to their homes, and of separating himself, for the first time, from that society, in which the chief happiness of his life had consisted. Nor did his family bear the loss of wealth and splendour with that equanimity which might have soothed his pain: his wife, as little distinguished for her humility as her patience, loudly reproached him with the unaccountable whim of wilfully quitting a station of such honour and profit, for poverty and insignificance; and even his daughters, well-informed and well-regulated as were their minds, could not relinquish their splendour without a sigh. More, apparently nowise discomposed, found only new occasions of pleasantry in the altered demeanour of his family; and, with a raillery much more effectual than argument, proved, that the grandeur and power which he had resigned were, in his eyes, the very trifles which he had always represented them. Observing the sadness of their looks, while devising such new economical arrangements as their altered circumstances required, he began, in a tone of humour, to assure them that they could still make a shift to live. "I have tried," said he, "various ways of living, and can

therefore direct you in this affair. We will begin with the slender diet of the students at law, and if that will not hold out, we may have recourse to the sober commons of Oxford: and if our purse should yet fail, we may still, as a last refuge, go a begging, and at every man's door sing a *Salve Regina* for alms." *

Thus did More endeavour to dispel the gloom of his family, and to communicate to them that cheerfulness and gaiety, of which no external circumstances could rob his own mind. His regret for altered circumstances were excited chiefly for persons beyond the range of his own household. In his better fortune, his liberality to men of genius, and his inexhaustible charity to the unfortunate, had been conspicuous among his virtues. Of those who applied to him for assistance, he relieved some with money, and others by his influence; but to dismiss a person in distress without some alleviation, was a wound which his feelings could not endure. "You might call him," says Erasmus, "the benefactor of all the needy." † In the neighbourhood of his residence at Chelsea, he erected a house for the reception of aged people, who were maintained at his expence; and it was

* Roper, p. 30. Herbert, p. 270. More alluded to the practice of the Mendicant Friars.

† Erasm. Epist. 447.

the province of his favourite daughter, Margaret, to superintend this establishment, and see all the wants of its feeble inmates duly relieved.*

Filial piety.

The feelings of More were, about this time, deeply affected by the death of his father.† Sir John More had lived to a very advanced age; and, in the exalted reputation and honours of his son, endeared to him as they were by unremitting demonstrations of filial duty, enjoyed the highest gratification which can attend the declining years of a parent. The manner in which More testified his veneration for his father, affords at once a proof of his affection, and an amusing picture of the simplicity of the age. While Chancellor, he never passed through Westminster Hall to his seat in Chancery, without going into the Court of King's Bench, when his father sat there, and receiving his blessing on his knees. When they happened to meet at the public readings in Lincoln's Inn, More always offered the precedence to his father, who as constantly refused the honour on account of his son's higher office.‡ The venerable judge, after having seen his son elevated to the highest station that a subject could enjoy, lived not to witness the reverse of his fortunes.

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* More, 149. Hoddesdon, 63.

† See More's inscription on his own tomb.

‡ Stapleton, p. 156. More, 10 and 163.

More now gave himself wholly up to those avocations which had ever yielded him most satisfaction; and, in his retirement at Chelsea, passed his time in domestic conversation, in literature, and devotion. Aware that Henry, whose mind continually recurred with increasing violence to whatever had once become the object of its desire, would not fail again to importune him, and put his resolution to still severer tests; he diligently employed his present leisure in preparing himself for the worst. It was during this interval that, with an eye steadily and calmly fixed on the prospects before him, he erected a monument for himself in the church of Chelsea, with an inscription recounting the most prominent incidents of his life. *

Invitation to Court. 1533.

A few months after his retirement, he was again invited to court, to attend the public celebration of the king's marriage with Anne Boleyn. Henry, unable any longer to submit to the endless delays of the papal court, had already privately married this lady; and now proceeded, in open defiance of the pope's authority, to have her crowned in public. The bishops, knowing how much Henry would be gratified by the presence and seeming approbation of More, united their requests for his

* This monument, which still remains entire and undefaced, is situated on the south side of the chancel. The inscription, as it is of considerable length, will be found in Appendix III.

attendance at the ceremony; and, aware of the contracted state of his circumstances, sent him a present of twenty pounds to purchase a gown for the occasion. Amused with this gift, prudently adapted as it was to a poverty which he might have avoided by accepting the former magnificent tenders of the clergy, he returned for answer, "That he could not mortify their lordships by a second refusal of their presents; that he would accept the gown, as twenty pounds was no great matter to them, though very important to a poor man like him; but he trusted that they would allow him to wear it only when he found inclined."* His conviction of the legality of Henry's first marriage remained unaltered; and as he had resigned his station rather than obstruct the views of the monarch, he was resolute to give no sanction to measures which he could not approve. His declining to attend the coronation seems to have greatly irritated the king. Henry now perceived that no management could induce him to swerve, even in appearance, from his deliberate opinions; and the more he esteemed his virtue and authority, the more indignant he was that he could not induce him to countenance his measures. The angry feelings of the monarch were also perpetually exasperated by Anne Boleyn, † who looked on More

* Roper, p. 33. † More, p. 203. Hoddesdon, p. 94.

as her capital enemy, and who tarnished many shining qualities by an implacable spirit of revenge.

Indictment with the Maid of Kent. 1534.

An occasion was soon afterwards eagerly embraced to involve More in an indictment for misprision of treason. Elizabeth Barton, a fanatic nun, having, amidst certain fits with which she was troubled, uttered some wild ravings, which she and her credulous neighbours construed into inspirations of the Holy Ghost; two designing priests, perceiving the private advantage which they might draw from the circumstance, induced her to join with them in a scandalous imposture. By their direction she declaimed vehemently against heresy, and all innovations in religion; and, as her miracles and revelations, all tending to the same purpose, now attracted general attention, her cause began to be considered by many popish zealots as intimately connected with their own. Her pretended humility and devotion, with the intrigues of her accomplices, procured her some notice from Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, and still more Fisher, Bishop of Rochester. More himself was induced by these circumstances to investigate her story; and although he at once perceived the folly of her pretensions, he at first attributed her extravagances rather to delirium than artifice; for, in his letters to his daughter, Mrs Roper, he called her

always the silly * nun. Detecting afterwards her imposture, he declared her to be the most false, dissembling hypocrite he had ever known. † In the mean time, her accomplices, emboldened by a success which exceeded their most sanguine calculations, began to conceive the daring project of overawing the monarch. She was now instructed to declaim against the king's divorce, to send comforting revelations to the queen; and, at length, to declare, that, if Henry divorced Catharine and married another, he should not be king a month longer. Such treasonable speeches, rendered dangerous by the increasing reputation of the Maid of Kent, as she was called, could no longer be overlooked by the government. She and her accomplices having been brought to trial, and having confessed not only their impostures, but a secret train of abandoned profligacy, were deservedly executed. The Bishop of Rochester and some others were indicted for misprision of treason, in not disclosing some speeches of a treasonable nature, which, it was asserted, they had heard her utter; and the name of More, although nothing of this kind could be alleged against him, was included in the bill of attainder.

Of the injustice of this charge against More,

* Roper, p. 34.

† See his letter to Cromwell in Burnet's Collections, Vol. I.

every one was convinced; but though the most eminent of the king's ministers endeavoured to have his name struck out of the bill, Henry's consent could be obtained only on the condition that More should be brought to acknowledge the propriety of his divorce, and the legality of his second marriage. To extort this submission from him, a committee of privy counsellors, who had been appointed to hear his defence, were instructed to win him over by reminding him of the many honours and peculiar marks of attachment which the king had bestowed upon him, and by assuring him that his majesty was inclined to be as gracious as ever. If these gentle means should be found ineffectual, they were then commanded to charge him, not only with ingratitude, but with base treachery to his prince, in having induced him, by his subtle devices, to publish a book in defence of the pope's authority, which, to his great dishonour, was now turned against himself; and this accusation they were directed to conclude with threats of the severest vengeance. More, having refused to retract his opinions, and having heard them to an end, calmly replied, that their threats were arguments for children: that, undeserving as he was of the king's favours, he should consider himself as more unworthy of them if he could violate his integrity: that, as to the publication of the work in defence of the pope's supremacy, his majesty himself must,

on recollection, acquit him of that charge; since, instead of advising such a measure, he had, on being employed to revise it, strongly remonstrated against the high tone in which the pope's authority was there maintained: that he had earnestly entreated the king to have the expressions of this tendency softened, representing the bad purposes to which they might be applied, in the event of any future misunderstanding with the pope; but that his majesty had declared his resolution to set forth the pope's authority to the uttermost, whatever might be the consequences.

Relinquished.

The result of this conference served only to exasperate Henry's resentment; since More had not only persisted to thwart his inclinations, but had even dared to charge him with misrepresentation. Obstinately bent, therefore, on his condemnation, he resolved to prevent the effects of his well known eloquence, by refusing him permission to be heard in his own defence; and when he understood that the Lords were not likely to pass the bill of attainder, if this despotic and barbarous, yet not uncommon stretch of power, were put in force, he declared his resolution to be present at the discussion, imagining that the awe of his authority would prevail over the eloquence of his victim. The Duke of Norfolk and Secretary Cromwell, his two principal ministers, who, though friends to the Reformation, entertained a high esteem for More, and anxiously

desired to save him, at length fell on their knees before the king; and, while they represented to him the danger of allowing so eloquent a man to plead in his own defence, and the disgrace which his majesty would incur if the vote should be given against him in his own presence, they dexterously suggested the probability of finding a much more plausible ground of accusation against the object of his displeasure than this. To this last consideration the obstinacy of Henry at length yielded, and he consented that More's name should be struck out of the * bill.

Resignation and fortitude.

But, in that age, an escape from royal vengeance could never be looked on as leading to permanent security. From this time forward, More well knew that ruin was suspended over him, and that a pretext would not long be wanting to bring him to the scaffold: yet, far from attempting to avert his fate by any degrading compliance, he awaited its approach with the firmness of a hero, and the tranquillity of a philosopher. To fortify the minds of his family against the expected event, and to lessen those apprehensions by which they were perpetually distracted, he often spoke of death as the termination of those struggles which heaven had appointed for our nature; and the cheerfulness which always appeared in his countenance, when

* Roper, p. 40.

he discoursed of passing from the one state of being to the other, showed that the prospect inspired him with hopes unalloyed by apprehension. * A short time after the transaction which has been related, the Duke of Norfolk, taking an opportunity to represent to him how dangerous it was to contend with princes, entreated him, as a friend, to yield to the king's requests; and emphatically reminded him of the adage, that the wrath of a prince is death. "Is that all, my Lord?" replied More; "then there is only this difference between your Grace and me, that I shall die to-day, and you to-morrow. It is surely better to offend an earthly king than the King of Heaven; and temporal death ought to be far less the object of our dread than the indignation of the Almighty." †

Accused of corruption.

As it was now publicly known that Henry anxiously waited for some pretext to ruin More, those miscreants who are ever ready to minister to a prince's worst passions, began to search diligently for accusations against him; and, strange as it may seem, the first crime laid to his charge was corruption in his judicial capacity. One Parnel accused him of having made a decree against him in the court of Chancery, at the instance of Vaughan his adversary; for which More had received, at the hands of Vaughan's wife, (Vaughan himself

* Roper, p. 32. Hoddesdon, p. 78. † Roper, p. 40.

having been confined at home through illness,) a great gilt cup as a bribe. More, having been brought before the council to answer this accusation, readily owned that, as the cup had been brought him for a new year's gift, long after the decree was made, he had not refused to receive it. No sooner was this confession uttered than the minions of the king, and the partisans of Anne Boleyn, thinking that he was at length caught in a snare, began loudly to express their exultation. More, after allowing them to proceed for some time, gravely requested, that, as they had kindly listened to one part of the tale, they would now vouchsafe to hear the other. He then informed them, that having, after much solicitation, received the cup, he had ordered his butler to fill it immediately with wine, of which he drank to Mrs Vaughan; and when she had pledged him in it, he, in his turn, insisted on her again presenting it in his name, as a new year's gift, to her husband; and Mrs Vaughan, with much reluctance, actually found herself obliged to carry it back. The truth of this statement was immediately sworn to by the woman herself, and other persons who happened to be present at the time. *

In this manner terminated various accusations of the same description, which were now brought

* Roper, p. 35.

against him. Far from accepting of any previous gift, which might have biassed his judgment in the decision, the result invariably proved, that he had refused the most trifling token of gratitude from those whom his equity had righted. It was proved that he had received another cup, and, pleased with the pattern, had retained it; but it appeared at the same time, that, as the only condition of accepting it, he had obliged the giver to receive in return a cup of much greater value.* On another occasion two silver flagons were sent him by a suitor in Chancery: when they were presented by the gentleman's servant, More desired one of his men to take him to the cellar, and let him have his flagons filled with the best wine; then, turning to the messenger, "Tell thy master," said he, "if he like it, let him not spare it."† A lady, in whose favour he had made a decree in Chancery against a nobleman of rank, having, as a token of her gratitude, presented him with a pair of gloves, and in them forty pounds in angels,‡ as a new

* Roper, p. 36.

† Bacon's Works, fol. edit. 1740, Vol. III. p. 275.

‡ An angel was an old English coin of the value of ten shillings. Its denomination was adopted to commemorate a pun of Pope Gregory the Great, which seems to have highly flattered the vanity of the nation. Struck with the fair complexions and blooming countenances of some Anglo-Saxon captives who had been brought to Rome, he had observed, that, instead of *Angles*, they ought to be termed *Angels*.

year's gift, More took the gloves, but, pouring out the money, and returning it, said with a smile, "Since it would be contrary to good manners to refuse a new year's gift from a lady, I am content to take your gloves, but, as for the lining, I utterly refuse it." *

1534. Of misprision of treason.

An act, passed in the next session of Parliament, gave Henry a more promising opportunity for prosecuting his revenge against More. It declared the king's marriage with Catharine to be unlawful and void, ratified his marriage with Anne, and fixed the inheritance of the crown, first in her issue, and afterwards in the king's legal heirs. The same act commanded an oath to be taken in support of its provisions, under the penalty of misprision of treason; while all who should speak or write against the king's marriage with Anne were declared to be traitors. † This oath, extended by the ministers greatly beyond the meaning of the act, was administered chiefly to those who, from their rank and influence, could promote or obstruct the settlement of the crown; and Henry lost no time in requiring the obedience of More, expecting that the penalties annexed to the refusal of the oath would effectually enforce those arguments which had so often been urged in vain. At a committee of the cabinet council, which was ordered to sit at

* Roper, p. 36. † Herbert, p. 294.

Lambeth, several ecclesiastics of distinction, and More, but no other layman, were summoned to appear and take the oath.

The period which he had long foreseen was now arrived, since there was no alternative left but either to renounce his integrity, or incur the penalties of the statute. On the part which he was to act he indeed required no deliberation; but a final separation from his beloved family (for the character of Henry left him no certainty that he should see them again) was a prospect which he could not behold * unmoved. Obliged, however, to wear smiles on his countenance, that he might not increase those apprehensions with which they were already agitated, he endeavoured to take leave of them with the same affectionate composure as when the regret of a temporary parting was compensated by the assurance of a speedy return. Having privately settled his affairs, he retired, on the morning of his departure for Lambeth, into his chapel, where, after taking the sacrament, and performing some other religious ceremonies, he spent some time alone in finally closing the account between his mind and the world. When the hour of departure arrived, he came forth with a countenance full of composure and cheerfulness. "I thank our Lord the field is won," said he, with an

* Stapleton, p. 303.

air of triumph, to his son-in-law, Mr Roper, as he seated himself in the barge which was to convey him to *Lambeth. From this period he spoke and acted as a man who had renounced the cares of the world, and was scarcely capable of being moved, unless by the pleasures which he anticipated. To one who looked forward with the fullest assurance to a happy immortality, and who felt that nothing could compensate a deviation from integrity, an escape from a tyranny which endeavoured to make him renounce his most private and sacred opinions, was a cause of unfeigned exultation. If the ties of kindred still drew from him, by a sudden impulse, some sympathetic expressions, his usual demeanour was not less composed or cheerful than if the prospect of the longest and happiest life had been opened before him. Gay without an effort, and sportive wherever an occasion offered, he seemed resolved that no friend should weep, and no enemy triumph over his fate.

Sent to the Tower.

When called before the council at Lambeth, he declared that he had no objection to swear to the prescribed order of succession, since he considered the Parliament as fully entitled to regulate that matter in any way which it thought proper; and to this effect he offered to take an oath drawn up by himself. But the terms of the oath, as they at

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Roper, p. 41.

present stood, he declared to be irreconcileable to his conscience, since they asserted the illegality of the king's first marriage, and the legality of his second. Many arguments and solicitations were employed by his friends to overcome his scruples; but, though much affected by the earnest entreaties of Cranmer, the primate, and Cromwell, secretary of state, who highly esteemed and loved him, he adhered to his resolution in spite of his feelings, and in a gentle but firm manner, persisted in his refusal. He was in consequence committed for some days to the custody of the Abbot of Westminster, and in the mean time the course to be taken with him was debated in council. Archbishop Cranmer earnestly contended, that his proposal of swearing distinctly to maintain the order of succession should be accepted, without confining him to the prescribed terms of the oath. But Henry, whose resentment was now rendered wholly ungovernable by resistance, resolved that More should either yield or perish, and insisted that the penalties of the statute should be enforced, and that he should be immediately committed to the Tower. His friend Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, who had refused to take the oath upon the same grounds, was sentenced to the same *confinement.

* More, p. 220.

Cheerfulness.

It was now that More had an opportunity of proving to his enemies how little power they had over him, and with what ease he could sport, not only with the threats, but with the actual execution of their vengeance. He entered the Tower as if returning to his home, and conversed with the same tone of pleasantry which he was accustomed to maintain in his domestic circle. When the porter at the Tower gate, according to custom, demanded his upper garment; "Marry, friend, here it is," said he, giving him his cap; "I am sorry it is not better, for thy sake." "Nay, sir," replied the porter, "I must have your gown;" and this also he immediately gave him with the same good humour.* In ridicule of the insidious practice of placing spies to watch and report the words and actions of state prisoners, he called his servant, John Awood, who could neither read nor write, and swore him before the lieutenant of the Tower, that if he should at any time hear him speak, or see him write, any thing against the king, the council, and the government of the realm, he should immediately give information of it. The lieutenant, who had formerly received favours from him, began to apologise for the wretched accommodation, with which the dread of the king's displeasure obliged him to receive his benefactor. "Mr Lieu-

* Roper, p. 42.

tenant," said More, interrupting him, "whenever I find fault with the entertainment you provide for me, do you turn me out of doors." *

The nature of his confinement was in correspondence with the rigour of Henry's character. None of his friends or his family were at first allowed to visit him; and it was an unexpected act of royal clemency, when his favourite daughter, Margaret, the wife of Mr Roper, by her unwearied and earnest supplications, at length obtained that permission. Susceptible by nature, and cultivated with unremitting care, the mind of this lady had improved to his fondest expectations. While celebrated for superiority in music, and the other elegant accomplishments of her age, she was still more distinguished for her eminent proficiency in the learned languages. Cardinal Pole, a judge, as well as a conspicuous patron of letters, was so struck with the beauty of her Latin style, as to be induced with difficulty to believe that what he had read of her compositions was written by a woman. She wrote two declamations in English, of which she and her father each turned one into Latin, with such equal felicity, that it was doubtful which deserved the preference; and her treatise on the "Four Last Things" was at once so elegant and forcible, that her father readily acknowledged its

Interview with his daughter

* Roper, p. 42.

superiority to one of his own on the same subject.* Her emendations on the texts of the ancient authors were often very successful; and one of them, on a Greek writer, is mentioned by an able judge, as, in his opinion, equal to those of the most celebrated critics, of Scaliger, Turnebus, or Salmasius.†

With these accomplishments, Margaret was eminently possessed of the qualities which produce domestic happiness. Her deportment was modest and humble; her disposition gentle and affectionate. Equally distinguished as a wife and a mother, she was rewarded with the tender esteem of her husband, and the fond attachment of her children. With her father's disposition her own perfectly coalesced; she entered into all his sentiments, and was entrusted with the inmost feelings of his heart. From her praises, which he heard from the wise, the virtuous, and the accomplished, he derived peculiar gratification; ‡ and still more from the fond esteem with which she attributed to him whatever rendered her in any degree estimable. Before her entreaties could procure admission to him in prison she thus wrote to him: "What do you think, my most dear father, doth comfort us at Chelsea in your absence? Surely the remembrance of your

* Stapleton, p. 252 and 264. More, p. 139.

† Le Clerc. Bibliotheque Choisie.

‡ More, p. 141. Stapleton, p. 264.

manner of life passed amongst us, your holy conversation, your wholesome counsels, your examples of virtue." *

The circumstances of the present interview, which might probably be their last, rendered it peculiarly affecting. After they had spent some time together in devotion, a practice which they did not neglect in their better fortune, More endeavoured, by some indifferent and cheerful conversation, to calm that agitation which his daughter strove in vain to repress. He spoke of the court, and, learning that the young queen, intoxicated with her new honours, was occupied with one continued round of splendour, he lamented that she was blind to the precarious foundation on which her pleasures rested, and that she might so soon be overtaken by misfortunes which her mind was ill prepared to encounter. During this conversation, the eye of his daughter having been caught by a procession, attending to the place of execution two priests, condemned for the same crime of which her father was accused, she was unable to conceal the painful ideas which rushed upon her mind. More assumed a look of regret: "These holy men," said he, "are already accepted in the sight of heaven, and their virtue is now to be rewarded

* Mrs Roper's letter to her father in the Tower, in Stapleton, p. 256.

by admission into the happiness for which they have prayed; while your father, sinful and undeserving as he is, must still linger here in anxious expectation, till the measure of his trial is completed." When she was at length about to depart, he privately committed to her charge his hair shirt and knotted whip, the constant attendants of his more prosperous days. To her alone, from whom he concealed no weakness or virtue, the secret of his possessing them was known; and dreading that he might no longer be able to hide from his enemies an expression of zeal which might be construed into ostentation, he took this opportunity of delivering them to his daughter. *

With his wife.

An interview with his wife, for which permission was some time after obtained, if not so affecting to his feelings, equally proved his superiority to his fate. Mrs More, as we have already observed, was an excellent economist and manager of a family, qualities for which she had been selected by her husband: but, although she had so long enjoyed the benefit of his conversation, and had even, in compliance with his wishes, applied herself, at a very unsuitable age, to the acquisition of elegant accomplishments; yet her habits of mind had been too completely formed to be susceptible of much change. She could not by any means enter into

* Roper, p. 28 and 43.

her husband's sentiments with regard to the vanity of riches, the folly of worldly splendour, or an inviolable adherence to principle: nor could she conceive that the approbation of one's own mind might not be sufficiently reconciled with those small deviations from absolute integrity, which the common practice of very reputable persons sanctioned. When her husband quitted the chancellorship, she had reproached him with the unaccountable whim which led him to reduce his family to beggary and disgrace. She now visited him in the Tower, to remonstrate with him on what seemed a still more incomprehensible act of folly. "She could not understand," she said, "how he, who had always been reputed so wise a man, should now so play the fool, as to be contentedly shut up in a close, filthy prison, with rats and mice, when he might enjoy his liberty, and the king's favour, if he would but do as all the bishops and other learned men had done. And as he had a good house to live in, his library, his gallery, his garden, and all other conveniences handsome about him, she could not conceive what he meant by wilfully tarrying in this imprisonment." More, having heard her patiently to an end, asked her with a smile, "whether that house was not as nigh to heaven as his own?" As the good lady discovered much indignation at this indifferent treatment of her prudential reasonings, he altered his tone, and very

seriously assured her, "that he saw no great cause for joy in the things which she had mentioned, in a house which would so soon forget its master; that, if he were under ground but seven years, and then returned to visit it, he should find it possessed by those who would bid him begone, and tell him it was none of his. And how uncertain," continued he, "would be my tenure of these enjoyments! Surely that man would be imprudent indeed, who should endanger the loss of a happy eternity for a thousand years of pleasure; yet how much more foolish to risk eternity for what is not secure during one day." *

Indicted, The progress of the national change in religion soon prepared fresh trials for his fortitude. Henry, delighted with his new ecclesiastical powers, and enraged at the measures which the Court of Rome had adopted against him, had come to an open breach with the pope, and resolved to carry matters to the utmost extremity. While, by one act of parliament, he procured himself to be declared, without reservation, Supreme Head of the Church, his authority was enforced in another by a provision, which rendered it high treason to deny, by word or writing, this or any other of his titles. † This act, as it emancipated the nation from the yoke of

* Roper, p. 46.

† 26 Henry VIII. c. 1 and 13.

Rome, and destroyed the veneration in which her superstitions had so long been held, was every way politic and meritorious: but it was only the passions of Henry that ministered to the public good, for his intentions were as depraved as his conduct was atrocious. To revenge his quarrel, and extend his power, he wrested the supremacy from the pope; to procure supplies for his prodigality, he pillaged the monasteries: but while he gratified his passions by these encroachments on the church, he adhered with the most obstinate bigotry to such of her superstitious tenets as did not immediately thwart his inclinations. Encouraged by the tame submission with which his most tyrannical mandates were received by his subjects, he at length resolved that his own creed should be their only rule of faith, and that the sole crime in religion should be a dissent from his opinions. Provided by the act against denying his supremacy on the one hand, and by the existing laws against heretics on the other, with the means of exterminating all who should refuse a conformity to his will, he proceeded with the most impartial cruelty to massacre those Papists who would not abjure the pope, and those Protestants who would not acknowledge transubstantiation. By a refinement in barbarity, the heretics and the adherents of the pope were dragged on the same hurdle to the fires in Smithfield.

Afraid, perhaps, that such enormities would

rouse the public detestation, Henry at first affected to be deeply grieved at the measures which he represented as forced on him by the laws; and, as outward tokens of his sorrow, caused the hair of his head to be cut short, and his beard to be cut instead of shaven.* But he had soon waded too deep in blood, and become too familiar with murder, longer to regard the opinions of mankind. On looking back to these scenes, we are astonished that such a monster should have been permitted to reign or to live; but the state of men's minds at that period sufficiently accounts for their unresisting submission. The nation was divided into two great parties, the favourers of the old and of the new doctrines, and Henry seemed to waver between the two. Each of them, aware of the headlong violence of his passions, was afraid, by any show of opposition, to throw him into the arms of its adversary; and hoped, by an excess of submission, to win him over to itself. To such a degree also were the feelings of humanity blunted by religious bigotry, that each party seemed more gratified with the sufferings of its antagonists, than incensed by the injuries of its own members; and the most barbarous act of which Henry could be guilty, was sure to be loudly applauded by one part of the nation. His cruelties are therefore to be

* Herbert, p. 310.

charged on his subjects, almost as much as on himself. Any man of strong passions, if entrusted with uncontrolled power, and abetted in his most wanton excesses, would, like him, disgrace human nature by his enormities.

Finding the fires of Smithfield too slow to consume the heretics and Catholics who refused compliance with his will, Henry determined to strike a general terror by making some illustrious examples.* For this purpose, More and Fisher, who still lay in the Tower, were selected; and to the latter the first application was made for submission to the new order of things. But Fisher, who, according to the prescribed forms of installation, had already sworn to the pope's supremacy, could not be prevailed on to commit what he accounted an act of perjury, in acknowledging the supremacy of the king. His fate was precipitated by an ill-judged interference of the pope, who endeavoured to deter Henry from a farther prosecution by threats, and even sent a cardinal's hat to Fisher, as a martyr to the Catholic cause. The venerable prelate, in whom nature was almost exhausted by the pressure of years, and by the severities he had suffered, underwent the formality of a trial, was condemned, and executed.

The fate of Fisher is said to have been intended

* Herbert, p. 310.

by Henry as a warning to More, whose great authority at home and abroad, increased as it had lately been by his intrepid integrity, rendered the king more and more desirous to gain him over. * A committee of the privy council were, therefore, appointed to visit him in the Tower, and prevail on him to acknowledge the king's supremacy; or if, after every effort, they failed, they were instructed to draw from him such an explicit denial of it, as might afford a sufficient foundation for a charge of high treason. But argument or artifice were alike unable to extort either of these declarations from More. His opinions, with regard to the pope's supremacy, were indeed abundantly liberal, and seem to have been guided, not by veneration for the office, but by considerations of public utility. At one period of his life, he considered the successor of St Peter as merely entitled to a sort of primacy, which might be of much advantage in regulating the affairs of religion. † But on looking more narrowly into the question, while employed in revising Henry's defence of the pope's authority, he perceived that the simple primacy, which he had formerly been inclined to allow him, would, without more extensive powers, be almost nugatory. ‡ The impressions which he

* Herbert, p. 311.

† More's Letter to Secretary Cromwell. ‡ Ibid.

then received, having been gradually strengthened by the convulsions of the Reformation, and by the violent controversies in which he engaged, he appears at length to have been convinced that a high degree of authority on the part of the pope, in the decision of religious matters, was the only method of restoring the Christian world to prosperity and harmony. Still his ideas of the supremacy were not without limits; for the decisions of general councils, proceeding from the collected wisdom of so many able men, he accounted superior to the decrees of the papal court; * and, far from desiring that the pope should anywise interfere with the temporal jurisdiction of the kingdom, he had cheerfully given his support to the statute of *Premunire*, which destroyed all undue influence over the English ecclesiastics. †

If these considerations rendered him averse to abjure the authority of the pope, the concomitant requisition, the acknowledgment of Henry's supremacy, was attended with insuperable objections. To place his conscience at the mercy of such an umpire, to receive, renounce, or alter the articles of his faith, according as the passions or the whim of a capricious tyrant dictated, were conditions to

* More's Letter to Secretary Cromwell.

† Burnet's History of the Reformation, Vol. I. p. 120. edit. 1715.

which the mind of More could never submit; yet all these were implied in the required acknowledgment. Resolved, therefore, to stop short of such concessions, yet desirous to afford his enemies no just pretext for their persecution, he determined to express no opinion whatever on the subject. While concealed within his own breast, his sentiments, even if erroneous, could do no injury; and the statute itself was not so unjust as to construe silence into a crime. All the efforts of the committee could, therefore, draw from him nothing more explicit than the ambiguous expression, "that the act was a two-edged sword; if he answered one way, it would destroy his body; if another, it would ruin his soul."

The fresh indignation which the result of this interview occasioned in Henry was soon perceptible in the increased rigour of More's imprisonment. On pretence that he might write something against the king's supremacy, or second marriage, he was deprived of pen, ink, and paper, and even of all his books. Cut off by this wanton act of barbarity from the only intercourse which had for some time been allowed him with his family and friends, he had still the fortitude to triumph over his regret, and devise expedients to remove its cause. When he could by any means procure a little paper, he contrived, with the assistance of a piece of coal, to write to his beloved daughter, to

his wife, and some chosen friends; still endeavouring to inspire their minds with that tranquillity, which the miseries of his confinement, and the certain approach of death, were unable to wrest from his own. *

After having been imprisoned in the Tower upwards of a year, he was at length brought to trial; and here he proved that, if he was unmoved at the approach of death, his indifference was nowise allied to the carelessness of despair. Though obliged to support himself on a staff, from the weakness contracted during his rigorous confinement; yet his countenance, firm, composed, and animated, showed how fully his mind was collected, and how well his faculties were prepared to support him in a vigorous defence. † The charges exhibited against him proved, by their weakness, and the harsh terms in which they were couched, the eagerness of the court to accomplish his ruin. The silence he had maintained, when questioned

1535, for High Treason.

* Roper, p. 55. A letter written in this manner to a particular friend is inserted in Jortin's Life of Erasmus, Vol. II. p. 702. This epistle is employed in expressing his sense of many obligations, and in testifying how sweet was the remembrance of this friendship, even when the world was now no longer any thing to him, who daily waited in expectation of a passage to the next. At the conclusion he thus subscribes himself: "Thomas Morus: frustra fecero si adjiciam tuus; nam hoc jam nescire non potes, quum tot beneficiis emeris: nec ego nunc talis sum, ut referat cujus sim."

† Hoddesden, p. 105.

about the act, was affirmed to be malicious; the ambiguous expression which had been drawn from him, was attempted to be construed into a positive denial of the supremacy; and some intercourse by letter, which had passed in the Tower between him and the Bishop of Rochester, was also inserted among his crimes. *

The evident weakness of these allegations he unexpectedly found strengthened by the appearance of a witness, who charged him with having, in his presence, directly denied the king's supremacy. This witness was one Rich, who had raised himself to the office of solicitor-general, and aspired to still higher legal honours, by becoming the obsequious tool of Henry's cruelties. Rendered, by his cunning, duplicity, and unhesitating perfidy, a fit instrument for inveigling state prisoners into unguarded expressions, which might afterwards be produced against them; he had, in this capacity, already contributed to furnish a colour for the condemnation of the Bishop of Rochester. Having been sent with others to execute the order by which More was deprived of his books and writing materials, he seized this opportunity to draw the prisoner into a snare. With this view, while the others were employed in executing the commission, he addressed himself to More in a

* Herbert, p. 311.

style of great friendship, expressing a high admiration of his wisdom, learning, and knowledge of the law; and gradually turning the discourse to the subject of the supremacy, he begged leave to ask, as merely in the way of conversation, whether, if it were enacted by parliament, that he, Richard Rich, should be king, More would acknowledge him to be so? More replied, without hesitation, that he certainly should; since parliament was entitled either to make or depose a * king. Rich then inquired, whether, if the parliament should appoint him supreme head of the church, More would not show equal deference to its authority? More replied, that the cases were widely different; that parliament might interfere with perfect propriety to regulate the succession of our temporal princes; but as to the other question, he would, in his turn, beg to know, whether, if an act of parliament were passed, ordaining that God should not be God, Mr Rich would submit in this instance to its authority? Rich replied, that he certainly should not; since it would be absurd to attribute such power to parliament. †

Thus ended the conversation; but as the expressions which had passed were insufficient for the purposes of the solicitor, he resolved to frame the story to his own views. At the trial he came

* Herbert, p. 312. † Roper, p. 48. Stapleton, p. 320.

forward and swore, that, on his acknowledging, in answer to a case put to him by More, that no parliament could make a law that God should not be God, More had rejoined, "No more can the parliament make the king supreme head of the church." Astonished at the perfidy and daring perjury of his accuser, More turned round indignantly to his judges: "If I were a man, my Lords," said he, "that did not regard an oath, I needed not at this time, and in this place, as is well known to you all, stand as an accused person: but, if this testimony, which you, Mr Rich, have given, be true, then I pray that I may never see the face of God; which I would not say, were it otherwise, to gain the whole world." This solemn asseveration from a man, whose most peculiar virtue was an inviolable adherence to truth, seemed so much to outweigh, in the minds of the jury, the dubious deposition of Rich, that the latter, confounded and mortified, endeavoured to confirm his evidence, by bringing forward the others who had been employed with him in the commission. But they, conscious of its falsehood, and yet afraid to declare the truth, deposed that they had at the moment been so much occupied with carrying away the books and papers, as to give no attention to the conversation. *

* Roper, p. 49, 51.

The evidence of the principal witness being thus shaken, More proceeded to expose the futility of the other charges, with a force and eloquence which seemed to remove every doubt from the minds of his audience. But the firmest conviction of his innocence could not be expected to outweigh, with his judges, the hopes of royal favour, and the imminent danger of their lives. Almost without deliberation, and as if the minds of the jury had been made up before the trial, he was declared guilty of high treason, and condemned to die as a traitor. * He heard the sentence pronounced without any sign of surprise or indignation, and briefly addressed himself to the court, which consisted of a select commission of peers and judges. "My Lords," said he, "I have nothing further to add, but that, as the blessed Apostle Paul was present, and consented to the death of Stephen, and yet both are now holy saints in heaven, where they shall continue in friendship for ever; so I earnestly trust and pray, that though your Lordships have now been judges on earth to my condemnation, we may yet hereafter all meet together in everlasting love and happiness." † Condemnation.

On his return from Westminster Hall to the Tower, his fortitude had to undergo a severer trial. Interview with his daughter.

* Regin. Poli. Defens. Eccl. Anglic. lib. iii. Stapleton, p. 339.
† Roper, p. 54.

His favourite daughter, Margaret, apprehending that this might be the last opportunity of seeing her beloved father, had stationed herself at the Tower wharf, where he would necessarily pass. But when he appeared in sight, with the axe, the emblem of condemnation, borne before him, her feelings could no longer be controlled. Regardless of the spectators, she burst through the crowd, and through the guards which surrounded him, and, clinging round his neck, hung upon him in an agony of despair. While the tears streamed from her eyes, the only words that could force an utterance were, "My father! Oh my father!" More, while he pressed her to his heart, endeavoured to calm her agitation: he reminded her that she well knew all the secrets of his soul; that the knowledge of his innocence ought to lessen her dismay at his approaching fate; and that resignation was due to the will of God, without whose permission none of these events could take place. At length she made an effort to recover herself, and, faintly bidding him adieu, suffered the attendants to lead her away. But she had proceeded only a few paces, when the thought that she had seen her father for the last time, rushed with irresistible poignancy on her mind.—She again burst through the crowd; again hung upon his neck, and gave way to all the bitterness of her anguish. Her father, though his mind had long been prepared to

meet his fate, and though its approach had been wholly unable to discompose his fortitude, could not look unmoved on her distress; and a tear, which stole down his cheek, betrayed the emotion which he struggled to conceal. The spectators, deeply affected, beheld this tender scene in silence; and even the guards could not refrain from tears, while they gently forced her from the arms of her father. *

With this affecting interview his sufferings seemed to be concluded. On his return to the Tower he found an opportunity of writing once more to his daughter; and while he expressed the gratification which he derived from the last instance of her filial affection, he endeavoured to convince her of the happiness which he felt at his approaching deliverance from earthly sorrows. † Henceforth, indeed, his mind seemed fully restored to its habitual cheerfulness; and his enemies learnt with surprise, that their promises or threats were equally the objects of his pleasantry. Henry, still unwilling to persuade himself that all his power gave him no control over the mind of More, delayed his execution for a few days, in hopes that the nearer prospect of death might shake his resolution. He even affected to show his favour for the prisoner, by ordering that he should be simply beheaded, in-

* Roper, p. 55. † Ibid.

stead of being hanged and quartered, the usual punishment of traitors. More, when informed of this preposterous affectation of mercy, exclaimed, with a smile, "God forbid that any of my friends or posterity should have similar demands to make on the royal clemency!" *

1535. His condemnation had taken place on the first of June, † and on the sixth of that month, Sir Thomas Pope, one of his particular friends, came very early in the morning, by the king's command, to acquaint him that his execution was to take place on that day at nine o'clock. More thanked his friend for the good news; and when informed of his Majesty's pleasure that he should use few words on the scaffold, he readily acquiesced, adding, that he had otherwise intended to say something, which, however, could have given no offence. He expressed a desire that his daughter, Margaret, might be allowed to attend his funeral; and showed much satisfaction when he learnt that the king had already granted this permission to his whole family. Observing that Pope, who greatly esteemed and loved him, was deeply affected with the painful commission which he had been obliged to execute, he endeavoured to convince him, by the gaiety of his conversation, how little his lot was to be lamented: and when his friend could not refrain

* Hoddesdon, p. 419. † Stapleton, p. 314.

from weeping bitterly at parting, he reminded him, with a look of exultation, that ere long they should meet in eternal felicity. *

He now began to dress himself for his execution in the best apparel which he had by him; and when the lieutenant of the Tower, observing that this was too good for the executioner, who, according to custom, was entitled to whatever he wore at that time, begged of him to choose another dress; "If they were cloth of gold," said More, "I should think them well bestowed on him who was to do me so singular a benefit." Unwilling, however, to mortify the lieutenant by a refusal, he dressed himself in a gown of frieze, but, as a compensation, sent the executioner an angel of gold. †

As he passed along to the place of execution on Tower-hill, the sympathy of the spectators was expressed by silence and tears. One man alone, from among the crowd, was heard to reproach him with a decision which he had given against him in Chancery. More, nowise discomposed by this ill-timed expression of resentment, calmly replied, that if it were still to do, he would give the same decision. ‡

His behaviour on the scaffold corresponded to the whole tenor of his conduct. Perfectly com- Execution,

* Roper, p. 57. † Ibid. Stapleton, p. 353.
‡ Herbert, p. 312.

posed and collected, and dying in harmony with all mankind, his countenance was unaffectedly cheerful, and his words expressed a mind completely tranquil. He seemed to have resolved, or rather to have without an affort accomplished, that the faint-hearted should perceive nothing in the suffering, or even the solemnity of his end, which could deter them from encountering a similar fate. Perceiving that the scaffold was weakly erected, he said, in his usual tone, to the attending officer, "I pray thee, friend, see me safe up, and for my coming down, let me shift for myself." Observing the executioner pale and trembling, he said to him, "Pluck up thy spirits, man, and be not afraid to do thy office: my neck is very short; see, therefore, that thou do not mar thy credit by cutting awry." Having spent a short time in devotion, he took the napkin with which his eyes were to be bound, and calmly performed that office for himself; then, laying his head on the block, he bade the executioner stay till he removed his beard, "for it," said he, "has committed no treason." *

* Roper, p. 58. Herbert, p. 312. Stapleton, p. 353. To those who cannot enter into the character of More, and who cannot conceive that the prospect of death, under which their own hearts sink, should be viewed by any man with such complete indifference, his sportive humour on the scaffold may appear to detract from the dignity of his character. But, in fact, had he acted otherwise, his behaviour must have exhibited a constraint which his soul was too

Thus perished Sir Thomas More, in the fifty-sixth year of his age. The furious controversies of the times caused him to be idolized by one party, and censured above measure by another; but

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elevated to feel; he must have died a different man from what he lived. Such is the idea entertained of his behaviour on the scaffold, not only by his partial biographers, but by the most enlightened historians who have had occasion to mention it. Hume, after recounting them, adds, that "*nothing was wanting to the glory of this end*, but a better cause, more free from weakness and superstition." Lord Herbert exemplifies his wonderful fortitude by the same anecdotes; and Lord Bacon, in his Apophthegms, mentions the last of them in terms expressive of commendation. But the applause of Addison, whose delicate sense, both of morality and propriety, can only be questioned by those whose own feelings are obtuse, is still more pointedly expressed. In the Spectator, No. 349, he thus speaks of More's behaviour on the scaffold: "That innocent mirth, which had been so conspicuous in his life, did not forsake him to the last. He maintained the same cheerfulness of heart upon the scaffold which he used to show at his table; and, upon laying his head on the block, gave instances of that good humour with which he had always entertained his friends, in the most ordinary occurrences. His death was of a piece with his life. There was in it nothing new, forced, or affected. He did not look upon the severing of his head from his body as a circumstance that ought to produce any change in the disposition of his mind; and as he died under a fixed and settled hope of immortality, he thought any unusual degree of sorrow or concern improper on such an occasion, as had nothing in it which could deject or terrify him." Such is Addison's opinion of the last scene of his life. But it is to be recollected that this sporting with death would be as ridiculous in a man of a different character, as it was noble in More. "What," continues Addison, "was philosophy in this extraordinary man, would be frenzy in one who does not resemble him, as well in the cheerfulness of his temper, as in the sanctity of his life and manners."

his fate excited unfeigned regret among those of all parties who could duly appreciate his talents, his acquirements, and virtues. By those who knew him best, and who shared his intimate friendship, his loss was bewailed as an irreparable calamity. "More is dead," says Erasmus, in the accents of despondency, "More, whose breast was purer than snow, whose genius was excellent above all his nation." *

Henry himself seemed to be touched with compunction at the act of which he had been guilty; but it was only such compunction as can be felt by a tyrant inured to the murder of his subjects. When informed of the death of More, he rose, in apparent confusion, from the game at which he played with Anne Boleyn, and, to ease his own feelings, sternly reproached her with being the cause of this man's death. † But here the expressions of his regret terminated, and the remains, as well as the family of his victim, were still the objects of his unmanly vengeance. ‡ It was only by earnest prayers that his daughter Margaret at length obtained permission to remove her father's body from the Tower to the monument which he had erected for himself. It was not without danger that she, some time afterwards, conveyed

* Epistle Dedicatory to the Ecclesiastes.

† Stapleton, p. 365. More, p. 275. ‡ Ibid.

away his head, which, as was usual in regard to traitors, had been fixed on London Bridge; but, after a short imprisonment for this offence, she was graciously discharged. His fortune had been acquired by private industry, and impaired in the public service, yet the remnant of it was seized as a forfeiture to the crown, although he had endeavoured to secure it to his family, by executing conveyances previous to his condemnation for treason; and in such abject misery were they left, that they were unable even to purchase a winding-sheet for his remains! It was supplied by the liberality of a friend.* His family were driven from his favourite residence at Chelsea, which soon passed into the hands of a court favourite.† And

* More, p. 276.

† The fate of this house seemed to correspond in singularity with the fortunes of its master; for perhaps no private mansion was ever inhabited by such a succession of illustrious possessors. By Henry it was granted to Sir William Pawlet, afterwards Marquis of Winchester, and Lord High Treasurer. From his family it successively passed into the hands of Lord Dacre, the great Lord Burleigh, the Earl of Salisbury his son, the Earl of Lincoln, Sir Anthony Gorges, the Earl of Middlesex Lord Treasurer, Villiers Duke of Buckingham, Sir Bulstrode Whitlocke, one of Cromwell's peers, the witty and profligate Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Bristol, the Duke of Beaufort, and finally of Sir Hans Sloane in 1738, who pulled it down two years afterwards. Lysons' Environs of London, Vol. II. p. 80. The choice of so many noble possessors, if it gives testimony to the taste of More, in the selection of the scite, and the disposition of the grounds, is no less a satire on the President of the Royal Society, who, amidst all his pro-

all that they received from Henry was a pittance to the widow of twenty pounds a-year! His son, John More, a man remarkable for the innocence of his manners, and, indeed, of too moderate abilities to be anywise dangerous, had nearly shared the fate of his father. Condemned for refusing the oath of supremacy afterwards prescribed, he was, however, pardoned by an act of royal clemency.

Character. We have now seen the rise, progress, and end of a man, affording an example worthy of imitation to every individual of his race. In private life, as a son, a husband, a father, a master, and a friend, no character can be contemplated with greater delight, no conduct imitated with more certain advantage. Careful to discharge every duty, and limiting his good offices only by the extent of his power, he found all the relations which united him to his fellow men, cemented by affection, and strengthened by gratitude. In the circle of his own family he persuaded where he might have commanded, he allured where he might have threatened, he was familiar where he might have been haughty, he employed ridicule in place of severity, and mingled good humour with every injunction: he was thus beloved without any mix-

fessions of fine taste and regard for antiquities, levelled this ancient mansion with the ground, and made a present of the beautiful gateway, added by Inigo Jones, to some friend, for the ornament of an unknown villa.

ture of dread, and obeyed with all the alacrity of affection. No man was more successful in enforcing his instructions by example; and the flow of happiness which seemed to arise from his activity, his love of literature, his integrity, his beneficence, his piety, proved an irresistible admonition to the practice of his precepts.

His public life exhibited a rare combination of virtues and vicissitudes. Without having ever deviated, or been suspected to deviate, from the strictest integrity, he rose to the greatest eminence as a lawyer, and the highest rank as a statesman. Without having embarked in one court intrigue, or been guilty of one improper compliance, he obtained the complete confidence of an arbitrary monarch: he enjoyed this confidence for years, without requesting one personal favour. The only art which he employed to obtain success in his profession, or the favour of his prince, was the strenuous discharge of his duty; yet such a reputation did he acquire, that he was loaded with professional business amidst an extensive competition, and compelled by his sovereign to accept of the most coveted public employments. As a pleader, his exertions were never unapplauded; as a judge, his decisions were never controverted; as a statesman, his counsels were never suspected. In one unfortunate conjuncture, we find the prejudices of education, and the violence of theological dissensions,

confounding his better judgment, and hurrying him into acts which neither justice nor humanity can pass uncensured; yet, even then, he acted from mistaken principle.

The succeeding transactions of his life present only objects of admiration. Anxiously procuring his dismission from office, when he could no longer serve his country without sacrificing his integrity, he retired from power, splendour, and affluence, to all the privations of a poverty, the fruit of his disinterested patriotism. Yet his cheerfulness suffered no diminution; and if he looked back on his former state, it was only with a smile of satisfaction at the temptations which he had escaped. As the evening of life darkened around him, his unaltered mind appeared only more brilliant from the contrast. Many have met an undeserved death on the scaffold with undaunted heroism; but few have so completely overcome the apprehension of quitting life, the anguish of parting with friends, and indignation at the malice of enemies, as to display, in their behaviour, no constrained fortitude, no affected tranquillity, no ill-disguised bitterness at the injustice of their fate. Yet such was the case of More; so well did his mind appear reconciled to this world, and tempered for the next, that he seemed well pleased with his stay, yet gratified with his departure.

William Cecil

Lord Burleigh

WILLIAM CECIL,

LORD BURLEIGH.

WILLIAM CECIL, descended from an ancient and respectable family, was born at Bourn in Lincolnshire, in the year 1520.* Both his father and grandfather held honourable appointments under Henry the Eighth. His father was Master of the Robes, an office, in that age, of considerable distinction. During his early education, his progress either exhibited nothing remarkable, or has been overlooked by his biographers, amidst the splendour of his succeeding transactions; for we are merely informed, that he received the first rudiments of learning at the grammar schools of Grantham and Stamford.† But at St John's College, Cambridge, to which he was removed in the fifteenth year of his age, he gave strong indications of the qualities calculated to raise him to future eminence. He suffered no irregularity to interrupt his pur-

Birth and parentage.

Education

at Cambridge; 1535.

* Lord Burleigh's Diary in the British Museum, Harleian MS. No. 46.

† Life of William Lord Burghley, by one of his domestics, edited by Collins in 1732, p. 6.

suits, and seemed resolute to excel his fellow-students by the certain means of incessant application. That he might daily devote several hours to study, without any hazard of interruption, he made an agreement with the bell-ringer to be called up every morning at four o'clock. The strength of his constitution, however, did not correspond with the ardour of his mind; for, in consequence of much sitting, without proper intervals of exercise, he contracted a painful humour in his legs; and though subsequently cured of this distemper, his physicians considered it as a principal cause of that inveterate gout which embittered the latter part of his life. *

His indefatigable industry soon led to a proficiency which drew on him the particular notice of his teachers. The master of the college encouraged his perseverance by occasional presents, † but his ambition seems to have required no such stimulant. He began, at sixteen, to put in practice the methods then usual of acquiring literary celebrity, by delivering a public lecture. His first topic was the logic of the schools; but, three years afterwards, he ventured to comment on the Greek language, which had hitherto been cultivated with more eagerness than success. He was afterwards

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 6.

† Fuller's History of the University of Cambridge, p. 95.

ambitious of excelling as a general scholar; and successively directed his industry to the various branches of literature then cultivated at the university. *

When he was supposed to have laid a sufficient foundation of useful knowledge, he was removed from the university to Gray's Inn, where he applied himself to the study of the law, with the same method and industry as he had observed at Cambridge. He found leisure also for several collateral pursuits: the antiquities of the kingdom, and more especially the pedigrees and fortunes of the most distinguished families, occupied much of his attention; and, such was his progress in these pursuits, that no man of his time was accounted a more complete adept in heraldry. † This species of information, had he adhered to his destination for the bar, might have been of little utility; but, in his career of a statesman, it often proved of essential advantage. His practice was to record with his pen every thing worthy of notice which occurred to him either in reading or observation, arranging this information in the most methodical manner,—a singular example of diligence, which is authenticated to posterity by collections of his manuscripts, still preserved in many public and

1541 at Gray's Inn.

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 7.

† Bacon's Works, Vol. IV. p. 358, edit. 1740.

private libraries. While, from this practice, he derived, besides other advantages, an uncommon facility in committing his thoughts to writing, he neglected not to cultivate an accomplishment still more essential to his intended profession,—a ready and graceful enunciation. By frequenting various companies, and entering into free discussion, he learnt to express himself with ease and confidence; while the extent of his information, and the soundness of his judgment, prevented his fluency from degenerating into declamation.

Introduction at Court.

These acquisitions, united to a singular industry, must have raised him, at an early period, to great eminence in his profession, had not an incident, which introduced him to the notice of Henry VIII., soon diverted his attention to a different career. Cecil, having accidentally met, in the presence-chamber, with two Irish priests, who had come to court in the train of O'Neil, their chieftain, happened to enter into an argument with them on the pope's supremacy, of which they were zealous abettors; and, by his superior knowledge and fluency, so baffled his antagonists, that they began to vent their uneasy feelings in violent expressions. This contest was conducted in Latin; and the particulars of it having been reported to Henry, the monarch, pleased with this indication of talents, and still more with the successful refutation of the pope's supremacy, desired to see the

young man; and, in the course of a long conversation, conceived so favourable an opinion of his abilities, that he resolved to take him into his service, and directed his father (the Master of the Robes) to find out an office which might suit him. As no suitable situation happened to be vacant at the time, his father pitched on the reversion of the *Custos Brevium*, in the Common Pleas, which was readily granted.*

From the time of this introduction at court, 1542.
which happened within the first year of his attendance at Gray's Inn, and in the twenty-second of his age, though Cecil still continued his application to the law, his mind appears to have been more intently fixed on political advancement. A very prudent and honourable alliance, which he this year contracted by marriage, proved an effectual channel to future preferment. Introduced by his father-in-law, Sir John Cheke, a man of great respectability and influence, to the Earl of Hertford, maternal uncle to the young Prince Edward, and afterwards better known as Duke of Somerset; he was enabled to cultivate a connection which, in a few years, elevated him to the highest offices. †

About the commencement of the reign of Ed- 1547.
ward VI., he succeeded to his office of Custos Appointed Custos Brevium.

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 9.
† Camden's Annal. Eliz. p. 774.

Brevium, which brought him a revenue of two hundred and forty pounds a year, equal to more than a thousand pounds in the present age. While this accession to his fortune placed him in comparative affluence, and enabled him to prosecute his plans more at ease, a new family connection, which he formed about the same time, opened to him the fairest access to royal patronage. His first wife having died in the second year of their marriage, leaving him a son, he now married a daughter of Sir Anthony Cook, the director of the young king's studies, a gentleman who derived from his situation an influence confirmed by his talents and virtue. * Few men have more directly accelerated their rise by matrimonial alliances than Cecil; yet such were the excellent qualities of this lady, that we might consider his attachment to her the result rather of personal affection, than of a view to political advancement.

Master of the Requests.

His preferment under the new reign was not neglected by Somerset, to whose friendship he was recommended by various circumstances. While his talents and consummate application rendered him most useful to any one placed at the head of affairs; his decided attachment to the Reformation gave him at this period a particular claim to public trusts. The protector, eager to extend his

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 9.

popularity by accelerating those changes in religion, which were now so generally desired, committed the departments of government to the hands of such as were known to be firm advocates of the Reformation; and, on this occasion, he created Cecil Master of the Requests, an appointment of trust and distinction. *

In the latter part of the same year, the young statesman attended his patron in the expedition against Scotland, and was present at the battle of Pinkey, where the arms of England proved so decisively victorious. Here he very narrowly escaped destruction: a friend, observing a cannon directly pointed at him, pushed him out of its line, and, in the very act, had his own arm unfortunately shattered by the ball. † Cecil, with his usual diligence, wrote an account of this expedition. On returning home, he enjoyed various advantages for prosecuting his views at court, and his talents were well calculated to second his opportunities. The insight into the characters of those around him, which he derived from careful habits of observation, enabled him to suit his behaviour to persons and circumstances; and the prudent reserve of his conversation, joined to a perfect command of temper, preserved him from those imprudences which so often bar the way to promotion. He applied

Secretary of State.

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 10. † Ibid.

himself to gain the entire confidence of Somerset; and having unrestrained access to the young prince, both from the friendship of the protector, and the situation of his father-in-law, he quickly acquired the esteem and attachment of Edward. Somerset readily listened to the solicitations of his nephew in behalf of their mutual favourite, and, in the following year, promoted Cecil to the office of Secretary of State. *

1548.

Involved in the fall of Somerset.

With a rapidity proportioned to his merits and his address, Cecil had now attained one of the highest stations in the government; but his continuance on this envied height depended so much on the conduct of others, that the most consummate prudence on his part could not render him secure. He, also, was drawn along in the fall of his patron, which took place in little more than a year. Somerset appears to have been one of those unfortunate men, whose errors proceed rather from weakness than from vice, and whose good intentions are perpetually counteracted by a lamentable imprudence. Ambitious, rather than qualified to govern, he had taken advantage of his popularity to engross, in his own person, the whole powers of the council of regency, to which Henry, by his will, had entrusted the government; and though he showed no inclination to abuse his authority,

1549.

* Lord Burghley's Diary.

yet he displayed his ascendancy with an offensive ostentation. A profusion and magnificence, which might have served to increase his influence, contributed, by his imprudent management, to ruin the popularity which he so fondly courted. While he too eagerly grasped at wealth to support his expences, the fortune which he suddenly amassed made his integrity suspected; and, on his pulling down several churches to procure more splendid materials for erecting his palace, the act was reprobated as sacrilege, and his impiety regarded with horror. Even the best intended measures often became, in his unskilful hands, the source of new calamities. By his rash and ill-concerted attempts to redress the grievances of the common people, he not only provoked the nobility, but led the inflamed minds of the people themselves into excesses, which he was afterwards obliged to repress by severe military executions. His popularity at length became so much reduced, that the other members of the council of regency, whom he had stript of their just authority, ventured to attempt his overthrow; and, by a well-planned conspiracy, succeeded in committing him and his principal adherents to the Tower.

The chief actor in this plot against Somerset was the Earl of Warwick, son to Dudley, the infamous tool of Henry the Seventh's extortions. Warwick inherited all the avarice and faithlessness

of his father; and, being possessed of talents both for peace and war, he procured the patronage of Henry the Eighth, who could readily overlook hereditary taint, contracted in executing the mandates of tyranny. By the favour of that monarch, Dudley was successively raised to the rank of nobility, created an admiral, and appointed a member of the council of regency. Yet, inflamed with an ambition which no subordinate honours could satiate, he looked on the minority of Edward as a favourable opportunity for engrossing the chief direction of the government; and only delayed his attempts until the increasing unpopularity of Somerset, to which he contributed by every art, should ensure their accomplishment. Succeeding, by the conspiracy which he had planned, to the power, though not to the title of the Protector, he surrounded the young king with his creatures, compelled the council to submit to his dictates, and proceeded to secure his ascendancy by new acquisitions of fortune and rank. The last Earl of Northumberland having died without issue, and his brother having been attainted, the title was now extinct, and the estate vested in the crown. Warwick procured a grant of these large possessions, and made himself be created Duke of Northumberland.

Restored to office.

The views of this new ruler did not long prove adverse to Cecil; for, after having been detained

in the Tower about three months, he was discharged, and again found himself on the road to fortune. Northumberland, though awed by the previous popularity of Somerset, entertained little apprehension of his talents, and justly calculated that his partizans might be weaned by new prospects from their attachment to so feeble a leader. In Cecil he perceived the double advantage of influence over the young king, and of an uninterrupted application to business, while others wasted their time in cabals and intrigues. Aware, also, that with Cecil ambition was a predominant principle, while his prudence was such as to divert him from all dangerous schemes; Northumberland might expect that this statesman would be faithful to those immediately possessed of power, and would prefer the prospect of present aggrandisement to the forlorn generosity of adhering to the ruined fortunes of Somerset. But whatever were the views of Northumberland, Cecil was, by his means, again appointed Secretary of State; and, receiving the 1551.
honour of knighthood, was admitted into the privy council. *

This sudden release and subsequent elevation, by the enemy of his old patron, have exposed the motives of Cecil to suspicion. It has been alleged, that he had a secret understanding with Northum-

* King Edward's Journal. Stow's Annals.

berland even before the fall of Somerset, and that his new preferment was the reward of his treachery. But while no grounds are produced for these accusations, the events which they are adduced to explain seem otherwise sufficiently accounted for. In joining Northumberland, Cecil abandoned none of his principles; for the same measures, both in regard to religion and politics, were now pursued, as under the Protector: and if his conduct, in uniting with the decided enemy of his patron, be thought little consistent with honour or generosity, he only acted a part which Somerset himself speedily imitated. Northumberland, having completed the degradation of his rival, by extorting from him a public confession that he had been guilty of rashness, folly, and indiscretion, accounted him now so little formidable, that he ventured to affect the praise of generosity, by restoring him, not only to liberty, but to his seat in the council. Somerset, as mean in adversity as ostentatious in his better fortune, gladly accepted the boon; and, after all the indignities which he had undergone, consented to give his daughter, Lady Jane Seymour, in marriage to Lord Dudley, the son of his adversary.

But the ambition of Northumberland, and the indiscretion of Somerset, soon converted their external appearances of amity into more fatal dissensions. Although the late protector, by his imprudence and want of spirit, had become much degra-

ded in the public estimation, yet, in the day of his humiliation, the envy once felt towards him subsided into a better feeling; while the pride and ambition of his rival failed not to excite considerable odium. His reviving popularity awakened the jealousy of Northumberland, and his indiscretion, ere long, afforded a pretext for his destruction. While the mortifications which he had experienced could not fail to rankle in his bosom, his crafty antagonist endeavoured to goad him on to some rash and criminal enterprise. The creatures of Northumberland, who gained his confidence to precipitate his ruin, first inflamed his resentment, and then caught his hasty expressions of revenge; they suggested to him plans for insurrection, for assassinating Northumberland, and then disclosed them as accusations against him. When a sufficient number of such charges had been accumulated, Somerset was suddenly arrested; tried before a jury of peers, among whom were Northumberland and some of his principal enemies; found guilty of a capital crime, and led, along with several of his friends, to the scaffold.

Conduct to Somerset.

The part which Cecil acted, during these renewed calamities of his early patron, seems more reconcilable to prudence than to gratitude. It is said, that when Somerset, some time before his arrest, sent for him, and communicated to him his apprehensions, the secretary, instead of suggesting any means to

avoid his impending danger, coldly replied, "That if he was innocent, he might trust to that; and if he was otherwise, he could only pity him." * Pity, indeed, if he really felt it, was all that he bestowed; for it does not appear that he interposed, either publicly or privately, to avert the destruction of his former patron. And when we consider the character of Somerset, we must allow that such an interposition would have been as imprudent as it was likely to be unavailing. The weakness and irresolution of this nobleman were such, that no dependence could be placed on his executing any scheme proposed for his safety; and as he was surrounded by spies who insinuated themselves into his confidence, any beneficial intelligence communicated to him, could scarcely have failed to reach his inveterate adversary. In these circumstances, Cecil, by attempting the preservation of Somerset, would have incurred an imminent hazard of sharing in his destruction. Without benefiting his patron, he would probably have lost his fortune, his liberty, or his life; leaving behind him only the praise of unsuccessful generosity.

Diligence in office.

But whether we respect his prudence, or censure his ingratitude on this occasion, we cannot but applaud his conduct as a minister. While the court of England teemed with cabals, which occupied the

* King Edward's Journal.

incessant attention of the other public men, the secretary was diligently employed in executing his official duties, and in devising schemes for the discharge of the public debt, or the improvement of commerce. There still remains a complete statement of the king's debts in the month of February 1551, printed from a manuscript drawn up by Cecil, and which must have comprehended the whole of the public responsibility at that period, since neither the debts nor the revenues of the king were as yet separated from those of the nation. *

Effects a change in the Carrying Trade.

An important change, effected about this time in the commerce of London, is also attributed to his counsels. The carrying trade of the north of Europe, and of England in particular, had hitherto been engrossed, almost exclusively, by the merchants of the Hanse Towns. As the foreign intercourse, conducted through this channel, was found particularly productive to the revenue, it became an object with our monarchs to promote it to the utmost; and with this view, Henry the Third induced a company of these merchants to settle in England, by the lure of a patent containing various privileges, exempting them from the heavy duties paid by other aliens, and placing them nearly on a footing with natives. This corporation was called, from their place of residence, the Merchants of the

* See this paper in Strype's Memorials of Edward VI. Book ii.

Steel-yard, and effectually excluded all rivals from a competition—other foreigners by their exclusive privileges, and the English by their superior capital and skill. They continued, accordingly, from the time of their settlement, to engross nearly the whole continental trade of England. Their commerce was advantageous to the natives, as it opened a market to their produce, and induced them to devote their labour and capital to agriculture and manufactures; but it was attended, in the eye of the public, with various disadvantages. The gains of each individual, who partook of this monopoly, were apparently greater than those of the natives engaged in agriculture, manufactures, or internal commerce; and the collective wealth of these foreign merchants was doubly conspicuous from their residence in one spot. The jealousy of the English was strongly excited. They complained that the natives had but toil for their portion, while strangers ran away with all the profit. Besides these imaginary evils, this mode of carrying on trade was attended with some real disadvantages. As it was chiefly conducted by foreign vessels and foreign seamen, it afforded little accession to the maritime strength of the country; a circumstance which, on the breaking out of a war, was felt as a serious evil. Moreover, these merchants, on realizing a fortune, were apt to depart, and transfer to their own country that capital which, in the hands

of natives, would have improved the soil, and accelerated the industry of this realm. The native merchants had often remonstrated against the privileges of these foreigners; but Cecil seems to have been the first minister who effectually attended to their complaints. In consequence of his representations to the Council, the merchants of the Steel-yard were deprived of their charter, and subjected to the same impositions as other aliens.*

From this measure, as it was speedily followed by a large increase of the shipping and foreign commerce of England, Cecil has derived much reputation; yet, it is but too indicative of the unacquaintance of the age with the principles of trade. To abrogate the monopoly was a measure of evident propriety, in as much as, like all monopolies, it tended to limit the extent of commercial dealings, obliging our countrymen to sell their commodities somewhat lower, and to pay for foreign articles somewhat higher than they would have done, had the competition been open. But, in what way ought this irregularity to have been remedied? Not merely by cancelling the privileges of the Steel-yard merchants, and subjecting them to the same extra duties as other aliens, but by putting all merchants, whether natives or foreign, on a footing of equality. Such a measure would, it may be alleged, have retarded the

* Hayward's Life and Reign of Edward VI.

rise of the native merchants, inferior as they then were to foreigners in capital and experience: but in this, as in all other cases, the course which industry and capital would of themselves have taken, would have been the most advantageous to all parties. Our merchants, confining themselves for a season to the inland trade, it would have expanded more promptly, when our foreign trade absorbed little of our pecuniary means; and the latter also would have fallen eventually into their hands, in consequence not of acts of exclusion, but of the various advantages possessed by natives over foreigners.

But had Cecil, or any other statesman in that age, attempted to admit foreigners on the footing of natives, he would have been represented by public clamour as aggravating the evil which he professed to remedy. The disadvantages under which Cecil laboured are apparent in the fate of another project, which he entertained for the benefit of commerce. As the means of conveying mercantile intelligence were in former times extremely defective, and the regulations for levying the revenue were very imperfect, it was usual to fix by law a staple, or regular market, for the chief commodities of a country, and oblige all its inhabitants to convey them thither for sale. Foreign merchants might thus reckon on a regular market, and government had the best opportunity of levying its imposts both on

Proposes alterations in the staple.

exports and imports. The staple of our wool, and other chief articles of exportation, was fixed by an early act of Parliament in certain towns of England, but was afterwards, in the reign of Edward the Third, wholly removed to Calais, which at that period came into our possession.* It was thence transferred to the flourishing but distant port of Antwerp, where it still remained in the reign of Edward the Sixth. Cecil, perceiving the infinite disadvantages to which the exportation of England was subjected by this regulation, proposed to abolish the staple at Antwerp, and, as a far more desirable substitute, to open two free ports in England, one at Southampton, and another at Hull. A paper is still extant, containing the whole of this scheme clearly digested, exhibiting the arguments in its favour, and refuting the objections by which it might be opposed. But his colleagues in office were too little advanced in commercial knowledge, and too much engrossed with state intrigues, to perceive the advantages or concur in the execution of this project.

Favour with Edward.

Cecil, in the meantime, did not neglect to cultivate the attachment of the young king. That prince, whose diligence, knowledge, and discretion, far exceeded his years, seems to have been particularly delighted with a man so eminently distinguished for these qualities. The secretary was ad-

* 27 Edward III. cap. vii.

mitted into his inmost confidence, and was supposed to have had no small share in the productions ostensibly attributed to Edward. It is said, that the Princess Mary, on receiving a letter from her brother, exhorting her to abjure the errors of Popery, could not help exclaiming as she read it, "Ah! Mr Cecil's pen has taken great pains here." Yet he never employed his ascendancy over the young prince to procure extravagant grants, after the example which had been set by Somerset, Northumberland, and the other courtiers. Aware that a fortune, accumulated by such means, always exposed the possessor to envy, and might probably, in these unsettled times, be the cause of his destruction, he preferred the slower, but more secure method of acquiring wealth by the economical management of his regular salaries. By his appointment as Chancellor of the Order of the Garter, his income now received an addition of
1552. a hundred marks a-year; and it appears that after his father's decease, he also held the post of Master of the Robes. *

Conduct relative to Northumberland's designs.

Soon after this accession of honour and emolument, he found himself exposed, by his official situation, to dangers which all his prudence seemed insufficient to avert. The young king, who, by the extraordinary virtues and accomplishments of

* See a letter to him from Sir Edward Dymocke, in Lodge's Illustrations of British History, Vol. I. p. 185.

his early youth, had taught the nation to look forward with fond expectation to his more mature years, began to exhibit indubitable symptoms of a rapid decline. Amidst the alarm which this unexpected calamity diffused, the ambitious Northumberland began to meditate more daring plans for the confirmation of his power, and even undertook to fix the succession to the crown in his own family. Four females stood next in the order of inheritance: Mary and Elizabeth, daughters of Henry the Eighth; Mary, Queen of Scots, grand-daughter of Henry's eldest sister; and the Duchess of Suffolk, daughter of his second sister. The title of the last, although evidently posterior to the others, Northumberland resolved to enforce as preferable to the whole. He represented to Edward, that his two half-sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, having been declared illegitimate by act of Parliament, were for ever debarred from the succession; that the Queen of Scots having been passed over in his father's will, was also to be considered as excluded; and that, even had this objection not existed, she ought to be prevented from reducing England as well as Scotland to a province of France, an event which, unless prevented by her exclusion, her marriage with the dauphin rendered inevitable. Availing himself of the king's attachment to the Protestant religion, he depicted the dangers to which it would be exposed, if such

bigotted Catholics as either of the Marys ascended the throne; and as this objection did not apply to Edward's favourite sister Elizabeth, who had been educated in the principles of the Reformation, he urged, that it was impossible to devise any pretext for excluding one sister, without excluding both. The prince, enfeebled by disease, and surrounded by the creatures of Northumberland, was at length overcome by his arguments and importunities, and consented to fix the succession in the Duchess of Suffolk, who was willing to wave her title in favour of her daughter, the Lady Jane Grey. To complete this artful scheme, Northumberland now procured the Lady Jane in marriage to his fourth son, Lord Guilford Dudley, and enjoyed the prospect of continuing to manage the affairs of the kingdom at his pleasure, and of transmitting the succession to his posterity.

For this alteration in the succession to the throne, Northumberland obtained from the prince a patent, and required that it should be signed by all the members of the privy council; a concession which the dread of his vengeance extorted even from those most averse to the transaction. Cecil, among the rest, affixed his name to the patent, but whether from inclination or compulsion has been disputed. While he is charged by some with having been very active in the enterprises of the duke, and with having assisted in drawing up the instru-

ment for altering the succession, * he himself, in a memorial which he afterwards drew up in his justification, asserts, that both threats and promises were employed in vain to extort his concurrence in the attempt; that he refused to subscribe the patent as a privy counsellor; and that he was at length only prevailed on, by the king's earnest entreaty, to write his name as witness to the royal signature. The character of Cecil leaves us, indeed, no room to suspect that he entered into the views of Northumberland farther than his own immediate safety required. He might have been sufficiently willing, had a fair opportunity offered, to set aside Mary the next heiress, from whose bigoted attachment to popery he had nothing to hope, and every thing to apprehend. But the reasons which might have led him to oppose Mary would have induced him to support Elizabeth, and he knew that the objections against the title of Lady Jane were too weighty to be removed by the patent of a minor on his death-bed. Although Parliament, with whom the ultimate right of confirming or altering the order of succession was acknowledged to reside, had enabled Henry the Eighth to dispose of the crown by will, yet, as it had not empowered Edward to alter this disposition, his patent could not confer a legal title till

* Hayward, Vol. II. p. 237.

ratified by a new act of the legislature. But amidst the general indignation excited by the ambition and rapacity of Northumberland, was such a sanction likely to be obtained? or, if obtained, to ensure a general acquiescence? Influenced by such considerations, Cecil seems to have withdrawn himself, as far as personal safety would allow, from an enterprise originating in extravagant ambition, and likely to terminate in the ruin of its abettors. It is said, that when he found the project in agitation, he made such a disposition of his effects as might give them the best chance of security, in the event of his being imprisoned, or obliged to quit the kingdom. *

Retirement from public affairs.

On the death of Edward, Cecil found himself, along with the rest of the privy council, in the power of Northumberland; but perceiving that total failure was soon to overtake the illegal measures of that infatuated nobleman, he resolutely refused to draw up the proclamation declaring the title of Lady Jane, or to write in its vindication; and the duke was not then in a situation to punish his disobedience. Soon afterwards he found means, along with the other privy-counsellors, to escape and join Mary, who had already been proclaimed queen, and who was pleased to receive him very graciously. As he knew that, among her partizans,

* Burnet's Hist. of Reform. Vol. II. p. 223.

he had many enemies, and that they had already made some unsuccessful attempts to prejudice her against him, he took advantage of her present favourable disposition, to obtain a general pardon for whatever might have been culpable in his past conduct; and with this indemnity he determined for the present to retire from public affairs. Mary, acquainted with his sagacity and great talents for business, was desirous to retain him in her service, and tendered to him the appointment which he had hitherto held; but as the change of his religion was an indispensable condition, he could not be prevailed on to accept these offers. * He was attached firmly and conscientiously to the reformed church; but had his religious principles been less sincere, prudence might have withheld him from embarking in the new government. The bigotry of Mary, and the violence of her prime minister, Bishop Gardiner, made it easy to foresee that the restoration of the Catholic religion would be attempted by fire and sword; and in the conflict between the zeal of the court, and the resistance of the great majority of the nation, it was impossible not to anticipate sanguinary executions and dangerous convulsions. Cecil appears to have adopted the resolution of keeping aloof from the cabals of either party, and of cultivating the pri-

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 11.

vate friendship of some of the new ministers, without giving any sanction to their public measures. By this means he both provided for his own safety, and was enabled to give occasional support to the cause which he favoured, without exciting the jealousy and resentment of the government.

Connection with Cardinal Pole.

The court soon became divided into two factions, of which the one urged the extirpation of heretics by fire and sword, while the other, confiding in the ultimate success of what they deemed the true religion, were of opinion that these violent methods would only harden the minds of men against it. Of these parties, the former was ruled by Bishop Gardiner, a man very indifferent about religion, but naturally of a severe and violent temper, and exasperated, by some injuries, against the Protestants; while the moderate party was headed by Cardinal Pole, a man extremely devoted to his religious tenets, but too politic, if not too humane, to attempt their propagation by violence. Expecting the safety of the Protestants chiefly from the ascendancy of the Cardinal's counsels, Cecil attached himself warmly to his interests. He had procured himself to be nominated one of the honorary mission which had been sent by the court to invite over this prelate, who resided in Italy at the time of Mary's accession; and he appears to have exerted himself successfully in acquiring his confidence, since we find him, in the following

year, attending Pole on an embassy to the continent.

It soon, however, became necessary for Cecil to take a more open part in defence of the Protestants. The Parliament having been induced, by the intrigues of Gardiner, and the bribes which he scattered among the members, to revive the old sanguinary laws against heretics, the court proceeded to carry them into execution with the most unrelenting cruelty. Bishops, venerable for age and virtue, were burnt in their own dioceses, and women are said to have been thrown, in the agonies of childbirth, into the midst of the flames. * Nothing could exceed the horror of the cruelties perpetrated, or the frivolity of the accusations on which the sufferers were condemned. Arrested on mere suspicion, and without having made any open profession of their creed, they were allowed only the alternative of signing a list of religious articles presented to them, or of being committed to the flames. All the established forms of law were now abandoned, and the prosecution of heretics entrusted by the crown to a set of commissioners, whose unlimited powers to try and condemn any one on whom their suspicions might happen to alight, took away the protection of in-

Defence of the Protestants. 1554.

* Burnet, III. p. 264, from an account of these transactions written or corrected by Cecil.

nocence, and rendered the subjects the sport of caprice or malignity.

A general horror and indignation were the natural consequences of these cruelties; and in the new Parliament, which was summoned to meet in 1555, the court was made to feel the preponderancy of the Protestant interest, and the futility of its sanguinary proceedings. Notwithstanding the manifest danger of opposition, several measures proposed by government were vehemently resisted by the Commons, and some wholly rejected. They were with difficulty prevailed on to pass an act enabling the queen to restore to the church merely those tenths, first fruits, and impropriations which remained in the hands of the crown; and could be induced to grant a portion only of the supplies demanded, though by no means exorbitant. They threw out two bills relative to religion;—one for incapacitating such as were remiss in the prosecution of heretics from being justices of the peace, and another for confiscating the estates of those who had quitted the kingdom on the score of religion. *

In this opposition to the measures of the court, Cecil, who had been chosen, without solicitation, one of the members for Lincolnshire, bore a distinguished part; and the rejection of the bill for

* Burnet, Vol. II. p. 322.

confiscating the estates of the exiles is, in particular, attributed to the force of his eloquence. This manly conduct exposed him to considerable danger, and he was once called before the privy council; but while the others involved in the same accusation with him were sent to the Tower, he succeeded in obtaining a hearing before he should be committed, and made such a satisfactory defence as procured his immediate acquittal.* The discretion of his conduct had indeed softened the rancour of his religious opponents, and procured him many friends among the Catholics, though convinced of his decided attachment to the Protestant cause. The light in which his opposition in this Parliament appeared to himself, we learn from the diary which he has left behind him:—"On the 21st of October," says he, "the Parliament met at Westminster, and I discharged my duty, as a member, with some danger; for although I had been elected against my inclination, yet I uttered my sentiments freely. I incurred much displeasure by this conduct; but it was better to obey God than men." Having, in the next Parliament, been again chosen to represent the county of Lincoln, he maintained the cause of the persecuted Protestants with the same discreet but undeviating resolution.

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 13.

Corresponds with the Princess Elizabeth.

While Cecil, by the reserve and moderation of his conduct, escaped the suspicion of the court, he was privately turning his views towards those changes in the government, which, he foresaw, would soon take place. It was every day more apparent, that the Princess Elizabeth would ascend the throne, and that her elevation would not be long deferred. No prospect now remained that Mary would leave offspring behind her, and the distempers of her mind and body seemed rapidly to subdue her constitution. While a dropsy, which she had at first mistaken for pregnancy, and aggravated by improper treatment, daily impaired her strength, the bad success of all her schemes for the restoration of popery, the general hatred excited by her cruelties, the loss of Calais, which was attributed to her negligence, the cold return which Philip made to her ardent attachment, and the resolution which he had formed of settling in Spain and abandoning her for ever, all preyed on her mind, and hastened her decay. Yet though, in this state of things, Cecil had every inducement to cultivate the favour of Elizabeth, it was only by incurring the most imminent danger that, surrounded as she was by the spies of Mary, any communication could be held with her. By uniting, however, dexterity and circumspection with a cool intrepidity, he found means to open and maintain a private correspondence; and often conveyed to her

such intelligence as enabled her to avoid the snares of her suspicious and vindictive sister.

The interval of leisure, which he at present enjoyed, he seems to have diligently spent in digesting plans for that order of things which he anticipated in the new reign; and so well had he matured his ideas, that he was enabled to present Elizabeth, on the very day of her accession, with a memorial, pointing out those affairs which required instant dispatch. Mindful of the favours which she had received in her adversity, and gratified to find a counsellor already prepared to give activity to her government, Elizabeth hastened to reward and secure his services. He was the first person sworn of her privy council, and was at the same time created Secretary of State.* Secretary of State; 1558.

From this time forward, Cecil may be considered as the first minister of Elizabeth, and the principal adviser of her measures. As he knew that on her life depended both his prospects and his safety, since Mary Queen of Scots, the next heir, was a Catholic, entirely directed by her bigoted relatives of the house of Guise; his attachment was sincere, and his exertions zealous. Elizabeth, possessed of penetration to perceive, and judgment to appreciate, his talents, rested with peculiar confidence on his fidelity and tried abilities. Her passions, her pre- And Prime Minister.

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 13.

judices, her caprice, made her frequently act in opposition to his sentiments, but none of her ministers or favourites was so generally consulted; and his cool, deliberate, weighty reasonings, often obtained, from her better judgment, concessions to which her inclinations were extremely averse. As it would be tedious to follow the labours of Cecil in an administration of forty years, we must now relinquish the narrative form, and attempt an outline of his policy, under a few general heads, taking as our text the grand questions which engaged the solicitude of the queen and her minister, in that age of dissension and danger. This will lead us to examine his policy in regard to religion; his civil policy, or administration of home affairs; his foreign policy,—towards the Low Countries, Spain, France, Scotland, and Mary Queen of Scots.

Policy relative to religion.

The measures relative to religion were those which most incessantly harassed him during his administration, and which required the greatest caution and management, because his sentiments corresponded ill with the inclinations of his sovereign. At the commencement of the reign of Edward the Sixth, the more gross absurdities of the Romish church, which his father had forcibly retained, were abolished; and a more rational worship, both in substance and form, established by law. Yet although many further changes were made in the course of this reign, by Archbishop

Cranmer and the other heads of the church, the Reformation was still considered incomplete. King Edward, in his diary, laments that he was prevented, by the opposition of the prejudiced, from restoring the primitive discipline according to his heart's desire; and in the preface to one of the service-books, published by authority, the framers observed, "that they had gone as far as they could in reforming the church, considering the times they lived in, and hoped that they who came after them would, as they might, do more."* The lamented death of Edward put a period, for the time, to the hopes of further improvement. Mary was no sooner seated on the throne, than she restored the faith and forms of the Catholic church, acknowledged the supremacy of the pope, reconciled her dominions to the see of Rome, and began, by the most cruel exertions of her authority, to replunge the people into that superstition and ignorance from which they had just emerged. It was to the accession of Elizabeth, who was known to be attached to the reformed religion, that the Protestants now looked forward as the period of their deliverance and triumph; and Cecil, aware that no object could be more important than to quiet the minds of men in this concern, had urged it upon that princess as the first of her cares.

* Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, Vol. I. p. 73. edit. 1793.

But the views of the queen and her minister, with regard to the extent of the projected Reformation, were far from coinciding. Cecil had learnt, from recent events both in his own and in foreign countries, how many dangers and convulsions might be avoided in religious changes, if government wisely took the lead. He had also observed the channel towards which the current of public opinion was strongly directed. The great majority of the nation had seconded Edward and his council in their successive measures in favour of the reformed worship, and looked forward to further changes, when the successor of that prince unfortunately attempted to tear up his work from the foundation. But the extravagant cruelties of Mary, although they intimidated many into an apparent submission, aggravated the general detestation of the Popish religion. The people, exasperated to behold their countrymen groaning under the torture, or expiring in the flames, now looked with horror, not only on the tenets, but on the rites, the ceremonies, the appendages, of a sanguinary church. Many Englishmen who had sought refuge in exile, having observed the tranquil and flourishing condition of states which had entirely renounced both the tenets and rites of the Romish church, hastened, on the accession of Elizabeth, to apprise their countrymen of those happy effects, and incite them to similar changes. To this state of

public sentiment Cecil might be desirous to accommodate the ecclesiastical establishment of England. The favourite, and confidential adviser of Edward, he seems to have deeply imbibed the reforming spirit of that reign; and we find him acting as one of the commissioners who prepared a purer code of canon laws, which the death of the young monarch prevented from receiving the royal sanction.

But for a thorough reformation the mind of Elizabeth was by no means prepared. The superstitious tenets which her father thought proper to retain had partly insinuated themselves into her belief; while her imagination had become still more impressed with the mysterious ceremonies and splendid array of the Catholic worship. She was therefore inclined to draw back from the more advanced measures of her brother's reign, and would have been content with a very few changes in doctrine and form. Yet Cecil had very powerful arguments to induce her concurrence with his plans. He could represent that the voice of the nation was loudly in favour of the Reformation: that the ill success of her sister, and the odium which she had incurred, proved the danger of attempting to maintain the worship of Rome: that the Protestants, both at home and abroad, looked up to her as their only hope, and would prove the firmest supporters of her government: that the Catholics, on the other hand, acknowledged Mary Queen of

Scots as the legitimate heiress of the throne, and were ready to make the most dangerous attempts in support of her title: that the more completely the minds of her subjects became alienated from the doctrines and rites of the Roman church, the more decidedly they would be united against the claims of her rival: and that it was impossible to be reconciled to Rome without giving up that supremacy in religious matters which her father had accounted among his proudest titles. *

* When we look into the arguments which Camden and Burnet have, on this occasion, put into the mouth of Cecil, we shall perceive that these historians have framed his discourse rather from his known principles and the circumstances of the times, than from any real documents. Yet it must be acknowledged, that the discourses which they attribute to him possess a verisimilitude that does not pass the licence usually permitted to historians. But Mr Hume, although he expressly refers to these writers as his authorities, not only new-models and varies their account, but even makes Cecil speak like a fellow-sceptic of the eighteenth century. According to him, the minister assures his sovereign that she may safely venture on any reformation she chooses, for "the nation had of late been so much accustomed to these revolutions, that men had lost all idea of truth and falsehood on such subjects." This representation, of which no trace is to be found in Camden or Burnet, is the more objectionable, that it is inconsistent, not only with verisimilitude, but with fact. That Cecil, so distinguished as a zealous Protestant, should have spoken thus lightly of religious tenets, is as incredible as that Elizabeth, who, on several occasions, was ready to sacrifice her interests to her bigotry, should listen to such a discourse: and still more absurd is it to suppose that a minister so sagacious, and a princess so penetrating, should have so egregiously mistaken the state of men's minds, as to believe them wholly indif-

By such considerations Cecil obtained the consent of Elizabeth to the restoration of the Protestant worship; but the plan which he first laid before the privy-council, and afterwards before parliament, for the new establishment, did not, in its provisions, go beyond that which had been adopted at the commencement of Edward the Sixth's reign. * Yet even to the moderate retrenchments thus made in the Catholic worship, the queen was with difficulty reconciled; and she went so far as to declare that she would not have passed the act for these changes, had it not contained one saving clause which entitled her "to ordain and publish such further ceremonies and rules as may be for the advancement of God's glory, and edifying his church, and the reverence of Christ's holy mysteries and sacraments." †

But although Cecil exerted himself strenuously to procure reformation in the church, his cool and temperate mind was little moved by religious animosities, and was willing to tolerate the Catholics, provided they engaged in no dangerous attempts against the state. The maxims on which Eliza-

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ferent to those very changes to which so many had signalized their attachment at the stake, and *all* the bishops affirmed their aversion by a resignation of their benefices. The ferment of religious opinions was perhaps never greater than at that very period.

* Bacon's Works, Vol. IV. p. 374, edit. 1740.

† Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, Vol. I. p. 130.

beth and her ministers professed to found their conduct in matters of religion were, first, "That consciences are not to be forced, but to be won and reduced by the force of truth, by the aid of time, and the use of all good means of instruction and, persuasion;" and, secondly, "That causes of conscience, when they exceed their bounds, and prove to be matter of faction, lose their nature; and that sovereign princes ought distinctly to punish the practice or contempt, though coloured with the pretences of conscience and religion." * The first of these maxims corresponded entirely with the moderation of Cecil; and the second, although capable of very different interpretations, according to the mildness or violence of the expounders, was, in his hands, a sufficiently safe principle. While the Catholics, enraged at the sagacity with which he detected, and the vigour with which he counteracted, all their enterprises, charged him loudly with cruelty towards them, they still were unable to produce any instance in which his severity exceeded what the immediate security of government appeared to demand. †

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* Bacon's Works, Vol. IV. p. 360. Also Knollys's Letter to Cretoy in Burnet's History of the Reformation.

† Bacon, Vol. IV. p. 361, 362. In a letter, in which he replies to some applications to mitigate his rigours against the papists, Burleigh affirms that these rigours were exaggerated, that they amounted only to very gentle penalties, and were employed solely

The queen still gave strong indications of an attachment to the forms of the old religion. Although prevailed on to command the more obnoxious monuments of idolatry to be removed from the churches, yet the service in her own chapel was still attended with such ceremonies and splendour, that foreigners could distinguish it from the Roman, only by its being performed in English. Here the choristers appeared in their surplices, and the priests in their copes: the altar, in the midst of which stood a massy crucifix of silver, was furnished with rich plate, and two gilt candlesticks with lighted candles: the service, on solemn festivals, was sung, not only with the sound of organs, but of cornets, sackbuts, and other musical instruments: and, that nothing might be wanting to its ancient solemnity, the ceremonies observed by the knights of the Garter in their adoration towards the altar, which had been abolished by King Ed-

against the known and active enemies of government. "In very truth," says he, "whereof I know not to the contrary, there is no Catholic persecuted to the danger of life here, but such as profess themselves, by obedience to the pope, to be no subjects to the queen. And although their outward pretence be, to be sent from the seminaries to convert people to their religion, yet, without reconciling of them from their obedience to the queen, they never give them absolution. Such in our realm as refuse to come to our churches, and yet do not discover their obedience to the queen, be taxed with fines, according to the law, without danger of their lives." Birch's Memoirs, Vol. I. p. 94.

ward, and revived by Queen Mary, were now retained. * As Elizabeth advanced in years, these propensities seem gradually to have increased; for, though she was obliged to guard against the Catholics as her inveterate enemies, though she had been excommunicated by the pope, and lived in perpetual danger from the plots, insurrections, and invasions of his partizans, yet Cecil found considerable difficulty in dissuading her from bringing the state of the church nearer the old religion. It was only by a firm and spirited interposition that he could prevent her from absolutely prohibiting the marriage of the clergy; and she is said to have often repented that she had gone so far in her concessions. † When the dean of St Paul's, in a sermon preached before her, had spoken with some disapprobation of the sign of the cross, she called aloud to him from her closet, to desist from that ungodly digression, and return to his text. On another occasion, when one of her chaplains had preached a sermon in defence of the real presence, which he would scarcely have ventured to do had not her sentiments been well understood, she openly gave him thanks for his pains and piety. ‡ The Protestants, strongly united as they were to her by every tie of interest, could not, without some mur-

* Neal, Vol. I. p. 144. † Ibid. p. 158.
‡ Warner's Ecclesiast. Hist. Vol. II. p. 427.

murs and indignation, observe her predilection for the rites of their opponents.

But while Cecil found Elizabeth ready to show the Catholics every indulgence which the public safety could admit, all his influence and entreaties were insufficient to procure a similar lenity for another class of her subjects. A considerable portion of the people eagerly desired a more thorough reformation than had been accomplished under King Edward, and the Protestants soon became divided into those who conformed, and those who would not conform, to the institutions of Elizabeth. Yet since the non-conformists, or puritans, (for so they were now called from affecting a superior purity in worship and morals,) differed from the adherents of the church in no point of faith, but merely in certain external forms, a few concessions on either side might have prevented the disunion. But this was not the age of mutual forbearance, and the party of the established church were ill prepared for limitations to the interference of government. They did not see that, while it was the duty of government to provide a competent number of well qualified religious teachers, and to draw up regulations for their direction in respect both to the substance and the mode of their instructions, it was equally its duty to go no farther, and to beware of turning their proposed benefits into oppression, by forcing obnoxious opinions and

forms on the public. Elizabeth, holding very different sentiments from these, not only prescribed peculiar forms for the religious worship of her people, but was determined that they should use no other. To these the puritans objected, because they had been previously employed in the popish worship as mystical symbols, and were associated in the minds of the people with the grossest superstition. No worldly consideration would induce them to assume what they accounted appendages of idolatry; while the queen, on her part, prepared to employ all her authority in support of the prescribed forms.

Finding that her council, the ablest and wisest council that England ever saw, were decidedly averse to measures which threatened to involve the nation in dangerous dissensions, she resolved to effect her purpose by means of some of the bishops, particularly Archbishop Parker, who readily and zealously entered into her views. * The severities to which these men now proceeded were only surpassed by the frivolity of their ostensible cause. A fervent attachment to the use of surplices, corner-caps, tippets, the cross in baptism, and the ring in marriage, were, in their eyes, the distinguishing characteristics of a Christian; and any dislike to these forms was accounted a sufficient crime to

* Neal, Vol. I. p. 192.

subject the most learned and pious clergyman to imprisonment and exile; or, as a mitigated punishment, to be turned out of his living, and consigned with his family to indigence. The most pernicious effects necessarily flowed from these severities: while the church was weakened by the loss of many able divines, and degraded by the introduction of men who could barely read the prayer-book and write their own names, the people began every where to collect around their expelled teachers, and to form conventicles apart from the establishment. Yet these mischievous consequences only set the queen and her bishops on framing new statutes to reach the refractory; and at length even the laity were brought within their grasp, by an act which provided that non-attendance at public worship in the parish churches should be punished with imprisonment, banishment, and, if the exile returned, with death. An arbitrary commission was appointed with full powers to bring all religious offenders to punishment; and as any resistance to the injunctions of the queen, as supreme head of the church, was at length construed into sedition and treason, many subjects of unquestioned loyalty were imprisoned, banished, and brought to ruin.

Nothing could exceed the imperious demeanour which some of the prelates, confident of royal support, now assumed. Archbishop Parker, having,

from a wish to display his authority, commanded one of his suffragans to suppress certain meetings which the clergy of the same neighbourhood were accustomed to hold for their mutual improvement, the privy-council, who looked on these exercises as extremely beneficial, since they greatly contributed to diffuse knowledge at a period when the clergy in general were ill instructed, countermanded this injunction of the primate, and ordered that these meetings should receive every encouragement. The prelate, however, having represented to the queen the danger to which her supremacy would be exposed, if he, her vicegerent, should thus be counteracted, readily procured her direct interference in support of his authority; and the council had the mortification to find the *exercises*, as they were called, suppressed not only in one diocese, but throughout the kingdom. * At one time, we find the whole council soliciting the haughty primate in vain, in behalf of clergymen distinguished for learning and piety, whom he had, on some frivolous pretext, expelled from their benefices; † at another, we find them, with as little effect, threatening him with the penalties of the law, which he had greatly exceeded in his severities. ‡ At last, Archbishop Parker rendered himself so obnoxious,

* Life of Parker, p. 461. † Neal, Vol. I. p. 373.
‡ Letter of the Lords of Council, ibid. p. 383.

that the queen found it prudent to allay the popular clamour by stopping short his career; but this produced very little alteration in the mind of Elizabeth; for when his successor, the moderate Grindal, refused to enforce some of her injunctions, she did not hesitate, by an extraordinary exertion of her supremacy, to suspend him from his functions, and meditated even to deprive him altogether. Whitgift, the succeeding primate, taught by this example, proceeded to severities which Parker would not have ventured to exercise, nor the queen, in the earlier part of her reign, have countenanced.

The efforts of Cecil, in an individual capacity, were equally unavailing in these days of intolerance. At first, his high office and known influence with the queen overawed the more violent prelates, and he was enabled to deliver several persons from their resentment. But when it became known that the prejudices of her Majesty were too powerful to be counteracted by the united voice of her council, his remonstrances, his threats, his entreaties, in favour of the oppressed non-conformists, were treated with equal neglect. The university of Cambridge, of which he was chancellor, had, much to their honour, made a bold and manly stand in support of freedom of opinion, and he had succeeded in maintaining their privileges against

the attempts of several of the bishops; * but when that learned body ventured to declare openly against corner-caps and surplices, the indignation of these prelates and the queen became so implacable, that he was obliged to abandon them to the rigorous injunctions of their adversaries. † Even after he had attained the highest office in the state, his solicitations in behalf of persecuted individuals, in whom he was interested, were without effect; ‡ and his own domestic chaplain, supported by the benchers of the Temple, whose lecturer he also was, could not escape the rigour of the government party. §

Cecil, as well as the other ministers, were sometimes put on the ungrateful task of acting as the organs of the queen's mandates against the nonconformists. Perhaps it might have been more manly to have refused this submission, and have renounced his office rather than his independence; but he knew, that, out of office, he could yield no protection whatever to the cause which he favoured; it was his policy to temporise rather than violently resist; and to procure, by temperate and persevering remonstrances, such partial changes in the measures which he disapproved, as would not

* Letter of the Lords of Council, Neal, Vol. I. p. 195.
† Ibid. 196. ‡ Ibid. 252, 306, 319, 381, &c.
§ Ibid. 390.

have been granted to an avowed and resolute opposition. Yet, at times, the impolitic severities of the prelates induced him to assume a tone of censure and authority, in which he never indulged unless his indignation was greatly roused. Archbishop Whitgift having drawn up a long list of captious articles, which the clergy were either to answer to his satisfaction, or to be suspended, and having proceeded, by means of it, to harass those who were obnoxious to him, Cecil attempted to stop his proceedings by the following letter:—

"It may please your Grace,

"I am sorry to trouble you so oft as I do, but I am more troubled myself, not only with many private petitions of sundry ministers, recommended for persons of credit, and peaceable in their ministry, who are greatly troubled by your Grace and your colleagues in commission; but I am also daily charged by counsellors and public persons, with neglect of my duty, in not staying your Grace's vehement proceedings against ministers, whereby Papists are greatly encouraged, and the queen's safety endangered. I have read over your twenty-four articles, found in a Romish style, of great length and curiosity, to examine all manner of ministers in this time, without distinction of persons, to be executed *ex officio mero*. And I find them so curiously penned, so full of branches and cir-

cumstances, that I think *the inquisition of Spain used not so many questions to comprehend and to trap their priests.* I know your canonists can defend these with all their particles; but surely, under correction, this judicial and canonical sifting poor ministers is not to edify or reform. And, in charity, I think they ought not to answer all these nice points, except they were notorious Papists or heretics. I write with the testimony of a good conscience. I desire the peace and unity of the church. I favour no sensual and wilful recusant; but I conclude, according to my simple judgment, *this kind of proceeding is too much favouring of the Romish inquisition, and is a decree rather to seek for offenders than to reform any.* It is not charitable to send poor ministers to your common register, to answer upon so many articles at one instant, without a copy of the articles or their answers. I pray your Grace bear with this one (perchance) fault, that I have willed the ministers not to answer these articles except their consciences may suffer them."

To this spirited letter the archbishop returned an elaborate reply, in which he defended his proceedings; and Cecil, perceiving that it was in vain to remonstrate, only replied, "That, after reading his Grace's long answer, he was not satisfied in the point of seeking, by examination, to have ministers

accuse themselves, and then punish them for their own confessions; that he would not call his proceedings captious, but they were scarcely charitable." Whitgift rejoined, by sending him other papers in his own justification, and endeavoured to convince him, that if archbishops and bishops should be driven to use proofs *by witnesses only*, the execution of the law would be partial, their charges in procuring and producing witnesses intolerable, and their proceedings altogether too slow and circumscribed for extinguishing the sectaries. *

Cecil was by no means satisfied with these reasonings of the prelate, and therefore united with the rest of the council in sending him a still stronger remonstrance, in which they complained that the most diligent, learned, and zealous pastors were deprived of their livings, for a few points respecting unimportant ceremonies; while the most ignorant and notoriously profligate characters were allowed to retain their cures unmolested, provided they submitted their consciences without reserve to their superiors. That the primate might not plead ignorance of the alleged abuses, the council sent with this letter a list of names in three columns, one of learned and worthy ministers deprived; a second of ignorant and vicious persons continued; and a third of pluralists and non-residents. But

* Strype's Life of Whitgift, p. 160.

these remonstrances, as they were not enforced by the arm of power, served only to exasperate the archbishop; and the same violent measures continued to be pursued with unremitting activity.

The ministers of Elizabeth, besides their unwillingness to occasion internal dissensions, seem to have feared that the exorbitant power entrusted to the superior clergy, for enforcing their forms, might give the Protestants the undue ascendancy possessed by the church of Rome. Sir Francis Knollys, one of the ministers, in a letter to his colleague Cecil, calls some of Whitgift's ordinances *articles of inquisition, highly prejudicial to the royal prerogative.* * And, indeed, there seemed to be reasonable grounds for alarm, since some of the clergy began, after the example of the church of Rome, to give hints of a divine right, which, by a wonderful concatenation, had been transmitted to them from the very days of the Apostles. † On the other hand, it was easy to foresee that the puritans, pushed to extremities, would begin to ques-

* Neal, Vol. I. p. 444.

† These ideas were now promulgated by Bancroft, but Cranmer had so fully considered himself as an officer acting by the king's authority, and was so well convinced that his episcopal power ended, like that of the other officers, with the life of the monarch who conferred it, that, on the death of Henry VIII. he refused to exercise any jurisdiction, until he received a new commission from King Edward.

tion that power from which their hardships proceeded; and, becoming more exasperated against the church, would begin to associate, with their earnest desire for ecclesiastical reformation, an expectation of changes in the government which supported it. But the peculiar circumstances of the times prevented these dispositions, however evident, from leading, during Elizabeth's reign, to any dangerous consequences. The puritans, as well as all other Protestants, fondly looked on her as their refuge against the intolerable cruelty of the Catholics; and, even when they felt themselves to be the objects of her aversion, they, as well as their brethren in Scotland, entered into associations for the defence of her person and government.

Civil policy of Cecil.

In civil transactions, the moderate and cautious maxims of Cecil had a far more conspicuous ascendant. Considering as the happiest condition of a nation, a state of unbroken peace, in which the people might proceed in the improvement of their circumstances by contented industry; he was the strenuous advocate of every moderate and conciliatory measure. Meriting, above almost all statesmen, the character of a safe politician, his principles of government were salutary at all times, but peculiarly fortunate in the dangerous and delicate period when he lived.

Reformation of the coin.

From the commencement of his administration under Elizabeth, he proceeded, as he had done du-

ring the short reign of Edward, in a gradual amelioration of the internal state of the country. One of his first measures was to reinstate the coin of the realm, which had been so much debased during the preceding reigns, as to prove extremely prejudicial to trade both at home and abroad. While the shilling, which, in the first years of Henry the Eighth, contained one hundred and eighteen grains of fine silver, was, in the latter part of his reign, reduced to forty, and, in the reign of Edward, to twenty; the money price of every thing was, by this means, both exorbitantly increased, and rendered extremely uncertain. * In transactions with foreign merchants, and even among the natives themselves, the difference between the real and nominal value of the coin was a source of endless disputes; and the popular discontents which ensued were both loud and general. Some attempts had been made to remedy the evil; but proving abortive, from the scarcity of bullion, and the want of perseverance on the part of government, the prospect of amendment was now deemed almost hopeless. Cecil, however, was strongly impressed with the great advantages which would result from a restoration of the coin; and having been convinced, from a mature consideration which he had given to

* Lowndes's Extract from the Mint, in Locke's Essay on Coin, p. 69.

the subject, even in the reign of Edward, that the preceding failures were the result of mismanagement, he prevailed on Elizabeth to commence the undertaking without delay, and gradually, but resolutely, to proceed as her means would allow. To render the people more eager to bring the base money into the mint, its current value was reduced by proclamation; and new gold and silver coin, of the standard weight and value, being issued in exchange, the money of England, from an excessive debasement, soon became the heaviest and finest in Europe.

His regard to public opinion.

But the measures which the state of public affairs obliged him to pursue were not always so evidently beneficial, or so generally acceptable. Aware, however, that the nation, if convinced that the plans of government were for their advantage, would concur in them far more certainly than from a dread of authority; he was anxious to secure the public opinion, and procure obedience rather by persuasion than command. He advised Elizabeth, as the first act of her reign, to summon a parliament. Here he introduced his propositions for religious reformation, and called on the Catholics to reply freely to the arguments which he advanced. In the succeeding period of the reign, however, the bold doctrines of the puritans, and the queen's exceeding aversion to any discussion which might touch her prerogative, prevented him

from employing this channel for the defence of his measures; yet he seems occasionally to have adopted the practice of bringing political transactions before parliament. There is still preserved a very clear exposition of the designs of Philip II. of Spain, which he delivered on one occasion in the House of Lords, and the heads of which he afterwards transmitted to the speaker for the information of the Commons. *

In the press he found a more constant and effectual method of influencing public opinion. As he never undertook any political measure without due deliberation, he concluded that the same reasons, which weighed with him, would weigh with the nation at large. Though involved in a vast maze of public business, he did not fail to bestow a portion of his time in justifying to the world both the measures of his government, and his own private conduct. Among the salutary effects of his political writings, it is mentioned that they contributed much to retain the people in their allegiance, during the dangerous insurrections which succeeded Norfolk's first conspiracy. There are still extant several of his pieces on that occasion, in which he paints the folly and danger of the rebels, the profligate characters of their ringleaders, and the mi-

* Strype's Annals, Vol. IV. p. 107.

† See Camden, Strype, &c.

series which must inevitably overtake them in the event of defeat.* To the many defamatory libels which the Jesuits published, during his administration, against Elizabeth and her ministers, it was his constant practice to publish replies. He knew too well the impression made by uncontradicted calumnies to let them pass unexposed. Silent contempt, he perceived, might be represented as proceeding from conscious guilt; and to suppress the propagation of slanders by force, would seem to betray both an inability to refute them, and a dread of their effects. He knew that better arguments could always be found in support of truth than of falsehood, and that it was the fault of the reasoner if the cause of right did not appear to the greatest advantage. The great facility of composition, which he had acquired in the earlier period of his life, proved of infinite importance to him in these voluminous apologies.†

Care of public education.

To diffuse information among the people, and render them capable of comprehending sound reasoning on public business, was a favourite object with Cecil. In contradiction to the absurd idea that ignorance is the parent of good order, that men will prove the best subjects when they bestow

* See Camden, Strype, &c.

† Many of them are published in Strype, and many still remain in manuscript.

no thought on their social relations, it was the maxim of this sagacious statesman, "that where the people were well taught, the king had ever good obedience of his subjects." * Considering the church as the grand channel for the moral as well as religious instruction of the people, he earnestly laboured to fill every ecclesiastical office with able, learned, and active teachers. To impress these sentiments on his sovereign, as well as his political colleagues, he warned them that "where there wanted a good ministry, there were ever bad people; for they that knew not how to serve God would never obey the king." †

Financial plans.

Fortunate had it been for the fame of Cecil, if his accommodating policy, his desire to gratify the queen, without incensing the people, could always have been carried into effect by means equally praise-worthy. But Elizabeth's passion for uncontrolled power sometimes led him into measures, or at least into schemes, which would seem to indicate that his regard to public opinion arose rather from the love of tranquillity, than from concern for the liberties of the nation. Of this description were some plans which he proposed for augmenting the royal revenue, without having recourse to parliament. To this last resource Elizabeth had a peculiar aversion; and, rather than endure the

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 55. † Ibid.

disquisitions and remonstrances from which the Commons could now with much difficulty be restrained, she was willing to relieve her pressing exigencies by alienating the crown lands, and entailing irremediable embarrassment on her successors. Cecil seems to have been desirous to avert these ruinous alienations, and yet anxious to gratify the queen by procuring supplies independent of the parliament. One scheme for this purpose, which he proposed in a speech to Elizabeth and her council, was to erect a court for the correction of all abuses, invested with a general inquisitorial authority over the whole kingdom, and empowered to punish defaults by fines for the royal exchequer. He urges the queen to the adoption of this measure by the example of her grandfather Henry VII., who by such means greatly augmented his revenue; and recommends that the court, to render its operations more effectual, should proceed "as well by the direction and ordinary course of the laws, as by the virtue of her majesty's supreme regiment and absolute power, from whence law proceeded." From this institution he expected a greater revenue than Henry VIII. derived from the abolition of the abbeys, and all the forfeitures of ecclesiastical revenues.* Strange! that a minister who, on other occasions, so wisely regarded

A court of inquiry.

* Strype, Annal. Vol. IV. p. 334.

the popular feeling, should propose a scheme which must have revived the odious extortions of Empson and Dudley. Refined speculations on the motives of men are almost always false, or we might be induced to suppose that Cecil, on this occasion, was desirous to turn the attention of the queen from more practicable methods of procuring illegal supplies, by directing it to schemes which could never be executed.

A general loan.

Another financial suggestion of his was entitled to approbation, if we make due allowance for the abuses and ignorance of the age. Although it was the acknowledged prerogative of the Commons, that no tax should be levied on the people without their consent, yet the kings of England had found various means to elude this right. Of these, one of the most successful was to levy money under the name of a benevolence, or voluntary loan, which, however, scarcely differed in any thing from a tax. Its amount was regulated by the government, and those from whom it was demanded were obliged to comply: the lenders received no interest while it remained in the hands of the public; and the principal, if ever returned, was usually detained till a very distant period. * Yet such

* The methods practised in levying these forced voluntary loans are developed in a curious paper of instructions from the council of Henry VIII. to the commissioners for the county of Derby, in-

was the effect of a name, that people acquiesced patiently in this abuse; and the same Commons who would have taken fire at an attempt to levy a subsidy by the monarch's sole authority, were brought to countenance his no less oppressive borrowing. As the benevolences were imposed at the discretion of the officers of government, who had also a power to accept what they chose to account a reasonable excuse; they were levied in the most partial and injurious manner. Some individuals were reduced to ruin by these exactions, while others, of equal property, were allowed to escape them altogether. Cecil, to render this practice less unfair in itself, and less severe on individuals, hazarded a proposition to raise a general loan on the people, equivalent in amount to a subsidy, and imposed according to the same proportions. *

It was with a more successful issue, and much Frugality.

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serted in Lodge's Illustrations, Vol. I. p. 71. The commissioners are here enjoined to employ every art that may work upon the hopes or fears of the person applied to; and if, after all, he obstinately refuses to comply, they are then ordered to swear him to secrecy in regard to what has passed, that his example may not influence others. But occasionally, much more severe measures were resorted to against the refractory; and from a document in the same collection, (Vol. I. p. 82,) we find Richard Reed, an alderman of London, who refused to contribute, forcibly carried off, by the king's order, to serve as a common soldier!

* Haynes, p. 519.

happier example, that he strenuously recommended a rigid frugality as the only effectual means of carrying on the government, without compromising its authority, or engendering public discontents. Elizabeth had the prudence to coincide with these economical views; and she has hence deservedly acquired the reputation of husbanding her resources with the utmost skill, and making very few demands on the property of her people. Although surrounded by powerful enemies, engaged in frequent wars, obliged to disburse large sums for the support of her friends abroad, and the suppression of dangerous enterprises at home, she conducted her government at less expence, in proportion to her undertakings, than any sovereign in our history. The large debts contracted by her father and sister, with which she found the crown encumbered at her accession, amounted, it is said, to four millions, an enormous sum in that age:* yet these she quickly discharged, and, at her death, could rank her most potent allies among her debtors. The States of Holland owed her eight hundred thousand pounds, and the King of France four hundred and fifty thousand. †

From this strict economy, of which Cecil never lost sight, there resulted the most important advantages. As the people were not harassed with

* D'Ewes, p. 473. † Winwood, Vol. I. p. 29, 54.

exactions, the government of Elizabeth was extremely popular, at a period when the dangerous machinations of her enemies, both at home and abroad, rendered popularity indispensable to her safety. Without illegal extortions, or contests with her parliament, she was enabled to maintain her independence, and to avoid concessions to which her haughty spirit could not submit. She was even able occasionally to acquire the praise of disinterestedness and generosity, by refusing the grants of money which were offered to her by the legislature without solicitation. By this management she so completely acquired the confidence of her subjects, that the Commons, though in these days extremely tenacious of their money, voted her, without reluctance, and without annexing any conditions, much larger sums than had been granted to her predecessors. They knew that their treasures were never misapplied; that nothing was expended which could possibly be saved; and the unavoidable exigencies of the state were always acknowledged by the nation before the government had recourse to parliament for supplies. When we consider the temper and conduct of Elizabeth, we cannot but attribute the tranquillity of her reign, in a great measure, to this rigid frugality. Scarcely less haughty and impatient of contradiction than her father, her pretensions to absolute authority were at times even more lofty, and her

usual language to her parliaments still less gracious. As the Commons, however compliant in other respects, were ever ready to encounter danger, rather than surrender the public money without evident utility, or a valuable consideration, it can scarcely be doubted, that, if she had been led into embarrassments by prodigality, their resolute demands for concessions on the one hand, and her obstinate refusal to abridge her power on the other, would have terminated in civil convulsions.

In the intercourse of England with foreign nations, this economy in the management of public money was replete with equal advantage. The allies, whom it was most essential for Elizabeth to support, were often reduced to such straits for money, that the dispersion of their forces, and the utter ruin of their hopes, seemed inevitable. In these critical emergencies, she found means, either from her exchequer or her credit, to afford them a supply; and its seasonableness gave it an efficacy beyond its magnitude. But though she relieved them opportunely, she wasted none of her resources without the most evident necessity. Her policy was never to afford them any supplies of men and money, until she found that they could not otherwise defend themselves; to send them at length succours just sufficient to retrieve their circumstances; and to withdraw her forces as soon as the most imminent danger was repelled. She was li-

beral only when her allies were much depressed, and it was necessary to revive their drooping spirits; at other times, she required that the money which she advanced should be repaid, and even that the expences of her armaments should be reimbursed. Most of her pecuniary assistance to Henry IV. of France was given in the form of loans; and the Dutch were obliged to put into her hands several fortified towns as security for the repayment of her advances. She thus enabled her allies to retrieve their affairs, and provided that the expenditure, of which they were to reap the chief benefit, should not become a burden to her subjects.

The frugality of Elizabeth did not escape censure; and Cecil, by whose counsels it was known to be enforced, was often reproached with sacrificing the best allies of England to his little-minded and parsimonious policy. But events fully justified his sagacity. While our allies were raised to the most vigorous exertion, and finally triumphed over their enemies, England herself, the main spring of these efforts, advanced in a progressive course of prosperity.

Opposition to grants to courtiers.

But it was the very sparing hand with which he distributed the public money at home, that excited against him the loudest clamours. In those days, it was customary for men of rank to waste their property in attendance at court, and in an idle

emulation of splendour, while they looked to the bounty of the sovereign for repairing their ruined fortunes. To the importunities of this train, who perpetually beset the court, and yet could urge no other claim than their own profusion, Cecil was inexorable. They complained that he not only refused to exert his interest in their behalf, but even hardened the queen against their solicitations. * Elizabeth, indeed, had no inclination to be prodigal of her treasures, unless when her individual predilections occasionally overcame her general parsimony. Her partial regard to the Earl of Essex seems particularly to have moved her liberality; for we find, that, on his departure for the government of Ireland, she made him a present of thirty thousand pounds; † and Cecil, who watched these instances of profusion with a jealous eye, computed, that, from first to last, her pecuniary gifts to the Earl amounted to three hundred thousand pounds: ‡—a lavish bounty, while the annual ordinary revenues of the state did not exceed five hundred thousand.

Elizabeth, anxious to avoid dependence on her

* "Madam," he was accustomed to say, "you do well to let suitors stay, for I shall tell you *bis dat qui cito dat*; if you grant them speedily, they will come again the sooner." Bacon's Works, Vol. III. p. 264.

† Birch's Memoirs, Vol. II.

‡ Naunton's Regalia, chap. i.

parliament, was too often persuaded to reward her courtiers with grants prejudicial to the national prosperity. Sometimes she yielded them exemptions from the penalties of the laws, sometimes she indulged them in the suppression of prosecutions; and still more frequently, she enriched them by monopolies of articles in general use. Against these abuses, which he justly termed the cankers of the commonwealth, * Cecil continually remonstrated, but too often in vain. Towards the latter end of the reign, however, the evil became so enormous as to compel a remedy; for the Commons, perceiving the commerce of the nation hastening to ruin under the pressure of monopolies, became so vehement in their complaints, that Elizabeth felt the necessity of abolishing the most obnoxious.

His improvement of the condi ion of the soldiers.

But while Cecil was the avowed enemy of all grants to idle suitors, he anxiously desired that those who performed real services should enjoy a liberal provision. It was by his salutary regulations that the common soldiers were first clothed at the expence of government, and received their weekly allowance directly into their own hands. † According to the previous practice, the whole pay of the corps was consigned into the hands of the superior officers, who were so little restricted, either

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 52. † Ibid. p. 47.

as to the time or the amount of their distributions, that the unfortunate soldiers were sometimes absolutely left to starve. The reformation of these abuses occasioned many murmurs among those whom it deprived of their unjust gains; but it infused new loyalty and vigour into the English army, at a period when foreign invasion, assisted by many internal enemies, threatened to involve the country in ruin. From a general adherence to this system, of being liberal to the servants of the public, and very parsimonious to the dependents of the court, it became a common saying, that "the queen paid liberally, though she rewarded sparingly."

His management of the revenue.

Cecil was raised to the office of Lord High Treasurer in the eleventh year of his administration. In this high station, while he punished with severity all oppression in the collection of the revenue, he gave strict orders that no one should be allowed to escape from his just proportion of the public taxes. All undue lenity of this sort to one individual, he considered a direct injustice to another: since the deficiency must have been made up by new exactions on the more honourable contributors. From this strict impartiality, and from his improved arrangements, the receipts of the treasury, from the same sources, experienced a great amelioration. The abuse, which then prevailed, of ministers retaining in their hands, and receiving interest on considerable sums of the pub-

lic money, he endeavoured to check by never issuing the smallest payment without an express warrant from the queen. Of the purity which he required in others, he himself set an example, for he never imitated the usual practice of other treasurers, in occasionally borrowing from the exchequer for private purposes; and he was almost the only one of Elizabeth's ministers who, at his death, owed nothing to the public. This strict attention to the interests of the exchequer is the more commendable, as it proceeded from a desire to diminish the burdens of the people. So averse was he to all new impositions on the subjects, that he would never allow the tenants of the crown-lands to be harassed by a rise of rents, or turned out to make room for higher bidders; and it was his excellent saying, "that he never cared to see the treasury swell like a disordered spleen, when the other parts of the constitution were in a consumption."*

Attachment to peace.

From the same considerations with his love of economy arose his steady attachment to pacific measures. Instructed both by history and by observation, that war was the great means of wasting the resources of nations, he firmly resisted the efforts of those rash and ambitious spirits, who perpetually endeavoured to plunge the nation into hostilities, with the view of advancing their own

* Camden, Annal. Eliz. Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 53.

reputation and fortunes. He had ever on his lips the salutary maxims, "that war is soon kindled, but peace very hardly procured; that war is the curse, and peace the blessing of God upon a nation; and that a realm gains more by one year's peace than by ten years' war."* By these pacific counsels, the queen, from the soundness of her understanding, and her aversion to expence, was usually swayed. On a few occasions, a longing for military glory, or a leaning to some favourite counsellors, who were men of more ambition than discretion, caused her to disregard the dissuasions of Cecil; but more serious reflection seldom failed to dispel her illusion.

The wisdom of Cecil, in adhering resolutely to a pacific system, deserves the more applause, as the condition of Europe, at that period, was calculated to tempt an English minister into extensive wars. While Scotland and France were torn by intestine convulsions, and the rebels often enabled to overpower the sovereign, the Low Countries, which had revolted against Philip, seemed determined to endure the last extremities rather than again submit to his dominion. England alone enjoyed internal tranquillity; and, by uniting with the insurgents of either country, might have acquired both a large addition of territory, and such other conces-

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 70.

sions as may be wrested from a weaker power. But Cecil well knew that conquests were not the true road to national aggrandisement; and that his country would suffer more in her resources and real strength, from an extensive and protracted war, than she could gain from its most successful results.

Yet, though the strenuous advocate of a pacific policy, his forbearance did not arise from timidity, nor his parsimony from a contracted mind. Against the dangers which threatened the kingdom, he prepared with firmness and activity; and when the public interests required it, he could advise a large expenditure and extensive armaments. When the prospect of the Spanish invasion filled the nation with just alarm, he drew up plans of defence; and, by his serene and collected demeanour, seconded his courageous mistress in diffusing general confidence and intrepidity. * His conduct with respect to the allies and enemies of his country forms so important a part of his transactions, and exhibits a system of foreign policy so much more extensive and refined than had hitherto been acted upon in England, as to demand a more particular examination.

Foreign policy.

From the early part of the sixteenth century, the political transactions of Europe had gradually

* Camden, Annal. Eliz. p. 582.

been assuming a more systematic form; and a sort of balance of power was at length established among the principal nations. Henry VIII. boasted of holding this balance; but he held it with so unsteady a hand, and his measures were so much the result of momentary passion, that his influence in foreign transactions was far from adequate to his comparative power. During the reign of Edward VI. England was prevented, by her internal factions, from giving much attention to external affairs; and, by the marriage of Mary with Philip, was sunk for a time into little else than a province of the overgrown Spanish monarchy. But under Elizabeth, various circumstances occurred to alter the aspect of affairs; and England, from the wisdom with which her government availed itself of her advantages, obtained an extraordinary ascendancy in the public transactions of Europe.

Of these circumstances the most important arose from the general change which, at this period, was taking place in religious sentiments. The commencement of the Reformation has been noticed in the life of Sir Thomas More, and since that time the new principles had spread through almost every country of Europe. The Roman hierarchy attempted to extinguish them by the aid of secular authority; but the reformers, after suffering incredible oppressions, began to defend their freedom of opinion by force of arms. Elizabeth, the great-

est sovereign of Europe who had embraced the new faith, was, from her situation, placed at the head of the Protestant cause. Exposed thus to the inveterate resentment of the Catholics, her protection was relied on by the reformed with the more confidence, as they knew the adherents of the pope to be no less her enemies than their own. The foreign policy of Cecil was adapted to this state of things. He knew that the English Catholics, who still formed a powerful body in the nation, were secretly encouraged, and urged to dangerous insurrections, by the foreign princes of their persuasion. He also knew that these princes were eager to seize an opportunity of uniting their forces to wrest the sceptre from Elizabeth; and that they had already begun to form extensive leagues for that purpose. The most effectual means to avert these dangers was, he concluded, to support the Protestants in their opposition to their Catholic sovereigns, who would thus be sufficiently occupied at home, and have neither the leisure nor the power to turn their arms against England.

Policy towards Spain and the Low Countries.

We are first to consider the application of this plan of policy to the Spanish empire. Philip, at that time the most wealthy and powerful monarch of Europe, was actuated both by inordinate ambition, and by a gloomy and unrelenting bigotry. By standing forth as the champion of Rome, and labouring to exterminate the Protestants by fire

and sword, he expected to acquire such a body of adherents in every country of Europe, as might pave his way to universal dominion. To a prince with such views, Elizabeth, who stood at the head of the Protestant interest, was necessarily the most marked object of enmity: yet there were circumstances which induced him, in the first period of her reign, to postpone his hostile schemes, and even to appear as her supporter. At first, he entertained hopes, by gaining her hand, to effect the darling plan, which his union with her sister had failed to realise, of attaching England to the Spanish monarchy. Even after this hope was gone, the marriage of Mary Queen of Scots with Francis the Second, which threatened, if Elizabeth should be overwhelmed by her enemies, to reduce England as well as Scotland under the dominion of France, rendered him desirous to support her against their attempts. But when freed from these apprehensions by the death of Francis, he began to put in practice the enterprises suggested by his schemes of aggrandisement. He still wore the mask of friendship, but he was from that time forward wholly occupied with the extirpation of heresy, and with projects to deprive its great protectress of her throne and her life.

Cecil was, from the first, aware of the real disposition and views of Philip. He perceived that if, by any contingency, the circumstances

which rendered a show of friendship towards Elizabeth subservient to that prince's interest should be removed, she would have every thing to dread from his ambition and bigotry. Yet even after the course of events had rendered this dissimulation unnecessary, and the King of Spain had begun to throw off the mask, the prudent minister of England still advised his mistress to temporise, and, as long as possible, to avoid open hostilities; when her power should be more firmly established, her finances improved, and her forces augmented, then, he showed her, would be the proper period to undertake the contest: in the mean time, it was her policy to dissemble her resentment at the faithlessness of Philip, to meet his advances as if she believed them sincere, and to send an embassy into Spain to settle, by negociation, any occasional quarrels that might arise. *

These cautious suggestions of Cecil, which the queen had the wisdom to follow, were loudly declaimed against by his political rivals, as resulting from a weak and timid disposition, calculated to compromise the glory of his country, and to degrade its government in the eyes of foreigners. The aids in men, money, and ammunition, which, at the same period, he counselled to be sent to the French Protestants, excited reproaches no less im-

* Camden, p. 70.

portunate, but of an opposite nature; for he, who had just been branded as weak and timid, was now accused of rashness and a disregard to the public safety. Such is the justice of faction!

In pursuance of his ambitious projects, Philip had resolved to deprive his subjects in the Low Countries of their ancient privileges, to bring them completely under the yoke of despotism, and at the same time to extirpate that heresy which, in conjunction with the principles of civil liberty, had already begun to flourish among them. For this purpose he sent thither a body of veteran Spaniards,
1568. commanded by the Duke of Alva, an experienced officer, but a gloomy bigot, in whose bosom long habits of tyranny seemed to have extinguished every feeling of humanity. His arrival in the Netherlands was marked by the most wanton barbarities. Confiscation, imprisonment, and exile, were accounted mild punishments; few, who had once the misfortune to become objects of suspicion, escaped torture or death; and the victims, whom malice pointed out to the jealous instruments of the tyrant, were often, without any form of accusation or trial, committed to the flames. Such was the barbarity of this man, that, besides the slaughters perpetrated by his soldiers, he boasted, with a savage joy, on leaving the Netherlands, that, during his government there, he had delivered eighteen

thousand of these obstinate heretics into the hands of the executioner. *

The unfortunate Flemings, quitting their native country in crowds, fled to England, the only state in Europe where they could depend on effectual protection; and Elizabeth, cordially receiving them, was enabled, with their assistance, to enrich her dominions by several valuable manufactures, which had hitherto been chiefly confined to the Netherlands. Nor was it long till an opportunity occurred of rendering an indirect assistance to their miserable country. Philip, having contracted with some Genoese merchants to transport into Flanders a sum of four hundred thousand crowns, for the use of his troops, who were almost in a state of mutiny from the want of pay; the vessels, on board of which this treasure was conveyed, happening to be attacked in the Channel by some privateers belonging to the French Hugonots, took refuge in the ports of Plymouth and Southampton. Here it was given out, both by the captains of the vessels and the Spanish ambassador, that their cargoes were the property of the King of Spain; but Cecil, who had always the best means of procuring intelligence, found out that the money, in fact, did not belong to Philip, that the Genoese merchants had not yet fulfilled their contract, and were, in conse-

* Grotius, lib. ii.

quence, the proprietors of the treasure. On this discovery, he entreated the queen not to neglect so favourable an opportunity of striking a decisive blow against the Spanish power in Flanders. By taking the money as a loan, and by giving security for its repayment, he argued that she might satisfy the Genoese; while the measure would effectually wound the interests of Spain, without any direct hostility. With this advice Elizabeth complied, and the event demonstrated its sagacity. While the Duke of Alva, thrown into the greatest embarrassment by the loss of his expected supplies, was obliged, to prevent an immediate mutiny among his troops, to make the most severe exactions from the inhabitants; the tyrannical manner in which they were levied, stretched the patience of the people to the utmost, and prepared their minds for the most desperate resistance. *

This transaction, which produced irreparable evils to the Spanish power in the Low Countries, gave rise to some temporary hostilities between Spain and England. The Duke of Alva seized the persons and goods of the English merchants in the Netherlands, and Elizabeth retaliated on the merchants of Flanders and Spain. But as Philip had not yet matured his schemes for taking effectual

* Camden, Annal. Eliz. Nanton's Fragmenta Regalia. Bentivoglio, part i. lib. v.

vengeance on England, and as his antagonist did not consider the time arrived for a final rupture with him, these differences were settled by negociation, and the merchants on both sides indemnified. Elizabeth even yielded so far to the remonstrances of Philip, as to refuse the Flemish refugees admittance for the future into her dominions; but this act of complaisance was followed by very unexpected consequences. These sufferers, finding no place of refuge from their enemies, returned, in despair, to their own coasts, seized the seaport of the Brille; and, being soon joined by crowds of their persecuted countrymen, reared the standard of revolt throughout Holland and Zealand. A solemn league between these two provinces, never again to submit to the tyranny of Spain, now laid the corner-stone of Dutch independence. The stand which the 1572.
talents of their general, the Prince of Orange, united with their own desperate valour, enabled them to make against this mighty monarchy, far exceeded the general expectation. It was not till after a long siege and great loss that the Duke of Alva succeeded in taking Haarlem; and he was finally compelled to abandon his attempts on Alkmaer. The duke was recalled, but the veteran forces of Spain, supported by her great resources, still pressed severely on the Hollanders, who seemed about to sink under the unequal contest. In this emergency, their eyes were turned to their only remain-

ing hope; an embassy, which they had sent to Elizabeth, imploring her protection, and offering her in return the immediate possession and sovereignty of their country.

1575. A valuable accession of maritime territory, as well as an opportunity of immediately enfeebling her capital enemy, presented very powerful temptations. But many weighty objections naturally occurred to her sagacious counsellors. It was apparent that, to accept the proffered sovereignty, would involve her in immediate hostilities with Philip; that he would be enabled to throw on her the reproach of aggression and injustice; that, as these provinces had applied to her merely from the insufficiency of their own resources, it was probable that she would have to sustain the great burden of the contest; that, from the exhausted state in which, even if ultimately successful, they would naturally be left by the war, their revenues could not speedily repair the waste of her resources which their defence must occasion; but that, as against the immense power of Philip their success was very doubtful, a present and certain loss would be incurred for distant and precarious advantages. Nor were the more remote evils less to be apprehended, since the possession of a continental territory would necessarily involve England in many disputes and wars, from which her insular situation seemed designed to exempt her. The influence of these

considerations on the mind of Elizabeth was greatly increased by her unwillingness to abet subjects in resistance to their monarch. Her ideas of sovereign power were, indeed, scarcely less lofty than those of Philip; and the depression of a dangerous enemy seemed too dearly purchased by an example of successful rebellion. She refused the proffered sovereignty, but she endeavoured to soften the disappointment to the provinces, by promising to mediate between them and Philip.

Her attempts at conciliation were, as might have been foreseen, ineffectual; but the circumstances of the Hollanders soon afterwards experienced an alteration, which justified a corresponding change in the policy of England. The other provinces of the Netherlands, abused beyond endurance by the horrible excesses of the Spanish troops, had, with the single exception of Luxembourg, risen in arms, and formed a common league to resist foreign tyranny. The strength of the confederacy was now sufficient to give it a fair prospect of success, and the English government resolved to assist the provinces without delay. A sum of money was sent over for the immediate payment of their troops; and a treaty of mutual defence afterwards concluded with them, on the prudential and frugal system which Cecil continually enforced. The queen stipulated to assist the Hollanders with five thousand foot and a thousand horse; but this reinforcement 1578.

was to be at their charge; to lend them a hundred thousand pounds; but to receive, in return, the bond of several towns in the Low Countries for its repayment, within the year. It was also agreed that, in the event of her being attacked, the provinces should assist her with a force equal to that which she now sent for their protection; that all quarrels among themselves should be referred to her arbitration; that her general should sit as a member in the council of the States, and should be made acquainted with all deliberations concerning peace and war.* By this treaty the queen raised the courage of the United Provinces at a critical juncture, effectually weakened her capital enemy, and avoided any considerable waste of her own resources.

But the independence of this noble republic was not to be accomplished without a new succession of difficulties and dangers. By the uncommon talents of the Prince of Parma, who now commanded against the States, and the assassination of their illustrious leader the Prince of Orange, they were again reduced to the most desperate condition. Again they sent a solemn embassy to implore the assistance of Elizabeth, and again proffered their sovereignty as the price of protection. The reasons, which formerly induced her to decline this

* Camden, Annal. Eliz. p. 507.

offer, still led her to the same determination; but, as the enmity of Philip was daily becoming more apparent, and the success of the States more essential to her security, it was her evident policy to render them more effectual assistance. In a new 1585.
treaty, she agreed to aid them with an army of five thousand foot, and one thousand horse, to be paid by herself during the war: but, not forgetting the maxims of prudence amidst her liberality, she stipulated that the whole of her expences should be repaid after the conclusion of hostilities; that the castle of Rammekens, with Flushing and the Brille, should, in the meantime, be placed in her hands as security; that her general, and two others of her appointment, should be admitted into the council of the States; and that neither of the contracting parties should make a separate peace. The reinforcements stipulated by this treaty were speedily sent over under the command of the Earl of Leicester. * The appointment of this incapable and arrogant officer is said to have been the only step, in the transactions relative to the Low Countries, that was taken in opposition to the counsels of Cecil. † It was also the only circumstance that led to unprosperous events, and impaired the efficacy of the English succours.

* Camden, Annal. Eliz. p. 508.

† Leicester's Commonwealth, p. 195.

Although the United Provinces, in their struggle for freedom, encountered many disasters, still their persevering courage, aided by some favourable incidents, gradually began to gain on their enemies. From a habit of successful resistance, they learned to look on the power of Spain, and the chances of war, with less apprehension; the active spirit excited among them began to display itself in commercial enterprises, which quickly augmented their resources. A powerful diversion was also produced in their favour by Henry the Fourth of France, who, after having subdued his internal enemies, now began to retaliate the many hostile acts of
595. Philip in the days of his adversity. Perceiving this favourable change in the circumstances of the States, which rendered them in less immediate want of assistance from England, Cecil, always averse to waste the blood and treasure of the nation in superfluous efforts, began to remind the queen that it was now time to diminish her disbursements in behalf of her allies. To this suggestion she readily hearkened; and, that the limitation of her intended retrenchments might appear a favour, she desired her ambassador to demand the immediate repayment of all her loans and expences. Against this unexpected requisition, with which they were wholly unable to comply, the States, in much consternation, remonstrated; and, after many supplications, prevailed on the queen to be satisfied with more

moderate conditions. By a new treaty, they engaged to relieve her immediately from the expence of their English auxiliaries; to pay her annually a small part of their debt; to assist her, in case it should be requisite, with a stipulated number of ships; to conclude peace only with her concurrence; and, in lieu of all her demands against them, to pay her, after the conclusion of peace with Spain, an annual sum of one hundred thousand pounds for four years. Until all these conditions should be fulfilled, the cautionary towns were to remain in her hands. On her part, it was merely stipulated that she should assist them, during the war, with a body of four thousand English auxiliaries, which, however, were to be paid by the States. *

Before the termination of his political career, Cecil had the satisfaction to conclude another treaty, in which still more favourable conditions were procured for England. The States agreed to fix the amount of their debt at eight hundred thousand pounds; to pay one half of this sum during the war, at the rate of thirty thousand pounds a year; to assist Elizabeth with a fleet equal to her own, if a convenient opportunity should occur of attacking Spain by sea; and to send a force of five thousand foot and five hundred horse to her defence, if

* Camden, Annal. Eliz. p. 586.

either England, or Jersey, or Scilly, or the Isle of Wight, should be invaded by the Spaniards. They farther agreed, that, so long as England should continue the war with Spain, they should pay the garrisons of the cautionary towns; a stipulation by which this country was at once freed from an annual charge of a hundred and twenty thousand pounds. *

War with Spain.

The first avowed assistance which England rendered to the United Provinces was the signal for open hostilities with Spain; and Philip, to gratify at once his revenge and ambition, attempted, by means of his famous Armada, to achieve the entire conquest of England. But as the failure of this immense armament, and various successful attacks on the fleets and harbours of Spain, gave the English a superiority at sea, Philip, finding his losses increase as his hopes diminished, showed a disposition to make peace on reasonable terms. This favourable opportunity of entering into negociation, Cecil now strongly urged the queen to seize; for although the war continued to be very successful, and very honourable, yet he felt the wounds which it inflicted under every appearance of advantage. By their captures from the Spaniards, a few individuals were enriched; and Elizabeth generally took care to have her full share in

1588.

* Rymer's Fœdera, Vol. XVI. p. 340.

these successful adventures: still the royal treasury was exhausted by the expénces of the war, and the reluctant queen frequently forced to replenish it by applying to parliament.

The war, however, was continued, because it offered temptations which neither the queen nor the people were able to resist. The scarcity of the precious metals rendered their value in these days extravagant; and the rich freights transported from the New World to Spain presented the most powerful excitement to avarice. Stimulated by these, Sir Francis Drake had, even before the commencement of open hostilities with Spain, begun his depredations on her commerce; and by the treasures which he brought home, as well as the accounts which he circulated, inflamed the avidity of his countrymen. Against these piratical acts the Spaniards vehemently remonstrated; but Elizabeth accepted of an entertainment and a handsome present from Drake, and gave the Spanish ambassador very little satisfaction. Encouraged by the countenance of their sovereign, and at length authorized by an open declaration of war, English privateers swarmed around the Spanish coast, both in Europe and America. These enterprises became the usual adventure of the times, by which the rich expected to increase their wealth, and the prodigal to repair their fortunes. In the event of a rich prize, Elizabeth was not forgotten;

nor did she ever refuse to gratify the captors by graciously accepting their presents. These exploits were usually undertaken in partnership, and a vessel or two were sometimes furnished by her majesty; a speculation which seldom failed to turn to the benefit of the treasury, as the queen's portion of the booty, by means of duties, presents, and various other allowances, generally proved much greater than her share in the equipment. An adventure of Sir Walter Raleigh having proved very successful, that experienced courtier humbly entreated the queen, who had borne a tenth part in the expence, to accept one half of the booty, in lieu of all demands. In these enterprises many, indeed, lost both their fortunes and their lives; but the successful adventurers alone attracted the public notice, and this lottery continued to prove irresistibly tempting.

It is probable that Cecil, who attended so much to the progress of national industry and wealth, perceived many bad consequences from this mode of warfare. The attention of the nation was withdrawn from manufactures and commerce; the capital and enterprise, which would otherwise have remained to the useful arts, were wasted on schemes of hazard. The people, neglecting those employments from which alone solid and general opulence can be derived, were in danger of acquiring the habits and calculations of pirates. But there were

other and more generous passions which rendered the court and the people unwilling to hearken to the representations of Cecil. Although Spain was at that time the most powerful nation in Europe, the English, with vessels far inferior, had harassed her mightiest fleet, captured her richest convoys, and even burnt her ships in her principal harbours. These successes, obtained by courage and skill over a haughty enemy, greatly elevated the spirits of our countrymen; and the glory of the English arms became a triumphant theme in every mouth. To pursue this gallant course, to follow up these blows by new achievements, to lay the pride of Spain prostrate at their feet, were the expressions which resounded throughout the nation.

Into these sentiments Elizabeth cordially entered; for, with all the soundness of her understanding, love of fame was a predominant passion in her breast, and nothing could exceed her desire of being admired, whether for the imagined charms of her person, or the heroic exploits of her subjects. In the present question, the influence of vanity was confirmed by a more tender sentiment. The young Earl of Essex had now succeeded to that place in her affections, which had formerly been held by the Earl of Leicester. No quality which could captivate seemed to be wanting in this young nobleman. A person uncommonly handsome derived new graces from manners easy,

Earl of Essex.

frank, and popular; and such was the ascendancy of these external advantages, united to a nature liberal and ardent, that he had the rare fortune of being no less the idol of the people than the favourite of the sovereign. Yet these shining qualities were accompanied by defects, which rendered him particularly unfit for the management of public affairs. Impatient, passionate, and wilful, he was so jealous of his honour, as to be inflamed by even an imaginary insult; so greedy of fame, that every successful rival appeared an enemy; so fond of military glory, that no considerations of policy could restrain him from precipitating his country into a war where he might earn distinction; and yet so unfit, from imprudence and heat, for conducting military operations, that no enterprise could safely be trusted to his hands. He had acquired some reputation in the Spanish war, and eagerly panted for more; he stood forward, therefore, as the vehement opposer of Cecil's propositions for peace; and his influence over the queen's affections, joined to the other considerations which we have mentioned, was sufficient to counteract the intentions of the minister.

Cecil was no less interested for the glory of his country than Essex; but while he felt how much security depends on political reputation, he perceived the folly of attempting to render a nation glorious by wasting her resources, or great by re-

ducing her to imbecility. He knew, that, with the substance, the shadow must disappear; that if the resources of an empire are exhausted, the reputation founded on them must soon vanish. Averse to the waste of public property, and detesting the wanton effusion of human blood, he could not, without indignation, see both sovereign and people led away by the same passions as Essex, and surrendering the reins of their understandings to the delusions of a heated brain. On one occasion, when the question of peace and war was debated in council, Essex proceeded, as usual, to declaim in favour of continuing hostilities, urging that the Spaniards, being a subtle people, ambitious of extending their dominion, implacable enemies to England, bigoted adherents of the Pope, and professing that no faith was to be observed with heretics, were incapable of maintaining the relations of peace. Cecil, who felt, that, if such arguments prevailed, the sword would never be sheathed, could not help indignantly exclaiming, in the midst of this harangue, "that the speaker seemed intent on nothing but blood and slaughter." At the close of the debate, perceiving that his reasoning was of no avail against the impulses of passion, he pulled out a common prayer-book from his pocket, and pointed in silence to the words, "Men of blood shall not live half their

days." * He felt that time and experience could alone dispel the delusion; still he endeavoured to accelerate that desirable event, by the publication of a tract, containing his arguments for peace; these, though disregarded by the multitude, were too distinct and forcible not to impress the reflecting and moderate. †

Policy towards France.

In the policy pursued by England towards France, as the passions of men were less interested, the councils of Cecil were followed, with little deviation. During the short and feeble reign of Francis II. the Duke of Guise, with his four brothers, uncles to Mary Queen of Scots, had obtained a complete ascendancy in the French government. Powerful from the influence of their house, and dignified by their alliance with the royal family, their talents, joined to a restless, daring ambition, overpowered their antagonists, and reduced their monarch to a mere instrument in their hands. The recapture of Calais from England, which the duke had unexpectedly effected, procured him unrivalled popularity; while his standing forth as the leader of the Catholics against the Hugonots, gave him unlimited sway over the most numerous portion of the people. As the champion of his faith, he prepared to enforce its adoption with fire and sword, and to exterminate Protestant-

* Camden, p. 608. † Ibid.

ism throughout France. The leaders of the Hugonots flew to arms; but, from their inadequate resources, they were quickly reduced to extremities, and, in despair, applied to Elizabeth for succour. Her compliance was enforced by the most evident interest, as the ambitious Guise aspired to place his niece Mary on the throne of England as well as of Scotland. A supply of men and money was accordingly sent without delay.

Throughout all the measures of Elizabeth towards the French Hugonots, we perceive the cautious and frugal policy of Cecil. He was of opinion that the French Protestants should, from time to time, be furnished with such supplies as might enable them to make head against their enemies; but that it would be folly to embroil his country farther than this object required. France and England had long regarded each other as dangerous rivals; and he understood human nature too well, to suppose that a change of religion in the government would alter these sentiments. A French sovereign, whether Popish or Protestant, would, he knew, be almost equally dangerous to England; and he deemed it extreme folly in this country to waste her resources in procuring a decided ascendancy to either the insurgent or the royalist faction.

Such were the maxims which guided the conduct of Elizabeth during the French civil wars.

When the Hugonots were almost driven to despair in the minority of Charles IX. she furnished
1562. them with some money and troops; but a part of the money was advanced by way of loan; and, in return, she obliged her allies to put Havre de Grace into her hands, as a pledge that Calais should be restored to the English crown. When the young Duke of Guise, at a subsequent period, had begun to emulate the enterprises of his father, and had reduced the Protestants to extreme dis-
1571. tress, she again revived their spirits by timely assistance; but it consisted merely in exciting the Protestant German princes to their support; in lending them a sum of money, for which the jewels of the Queen of Navarre were deposited with her in pledge; and in permitting a hundred gentlemen volunteers to pass over into France, where they fought at their own charge.*

1572. The massacre of St Bartholomew, in which the court of France butchered such multitudes of their unsuspecting Protestant subjects, naturally excited the horror of all the Protestant states of Europe. The English, fired with indignation, eagerly expected to see their government stand forward to avenge the rights of religion and humanity; and so earnest were the nobility and gentry in the cause, that they offered to levy an army of twenty

* Camden, p. 423.

thousand foot and ten thousand horse, to transport them to France, and maintain them at their own expence. * But Elizabeth, instructed by her wise counsellors, perceived too well the consequences of such a crusade, to second the hasty resentment of her subjects. She was aware that an attack on France, to be effectual, would require such a waste of resources as must enfeeble the nation, and render abortive all the frugal measures of her reign; that Charles and Philip, from a similarity of malignant passions, had formed a close union; that, against such a combination, the success of her utmost efforts in behalf of the French Protestants was, at best, very doubtful; that the only certain effect of an attack on France would be to exasperate that nation, and exhaust her own; and thus render Charles and Philip both more eager and more able to accomplish her destruction. But while she prudently dissembled her indignation, till a more favourable opportunity, by her secret pecuniary aids to the Hugonots, she enabled them again to take the field against Charles, and to procure from his successor, Henry III. conditions 1579.
comparatively favourable. †

When the gallant King of Navarre was afterwards called to the throne of France, she openly assisted him against that formidable league of the

* Digges, p. 335. † Camden, p. 452.

Catholics, which threatened ruin to them both. The apprehended desertion of his Swiss and German auxiliaries she prevented by a gift of
1590. twenty-two thousand pounds, a greater sum, as he declared, than he had ever before seen; and she added a reinforcement of four thousand men, to whose valour he owed some important successes. A body of Spanish forces having been introduced into Brittany, she furnished three thousand men to hasten the expulsion of these dangerous neighbours; but stipulated that her charges should be repaid her in a twelvemonth, or as soon as the
1591. enemy was expelled.* She afterwards sent another reinforcement of four thousand men to effect

* Camden, p. 561. When we compare these diminutive aids with the immense armaments sent to the assistance of allies in the present times, we may be surprised to hear Burleigh extolling the liberality of Elizabeth on this occasion, as something altogether extraordinary. Alluding, in a letter to our envoy in France, to this body of auxiliaries under Sir John Norris, he adds, "and besides that, her majesty hath presently sent away certain of her ships of war under the charge of Sir Henry Palmer, with the number of a thousand men or thereabouts, to serve upon the coast of Bretagne against the Spaniards, and against the Leaguers, thereby her majesty's charges grow daily so great, as the French king hath great cause to acknowledge her majesty's goodness towards him, *beyond all other friendships that he hath in the world.* And therefore you may do well when you find opportunity, to notify these so great charges both of her majesty and of her realm, as we may hereafter find thankfulness both in the king and in his subjects." Birch's Memoirs of Eliz. Vol. I. p. 66.

this object, which proved of great difficulty. Finally, she formed an alliance with the French king, in which it was agreed that they should make no peace with Philip but by common consent; that she should assist Henry with a reinforcement of four thousand men; and that he, in return, should refund her charges in a twelvemonth, employ a body of troops in aid of her forces in expelling the Spaniards from Brittany, and consign into her hands a seaport of that province for a retreat to the English. * On various occasions she advanced him sums to the amount of a hundred thousand pounds, but always in the form of a loan: and when, at length, he began to acquire a decided superiority over his enemies, her succours became more sparing as his exigencies became less pressing.

While Elizabeth thus avoided a waste of her resources, her aid was so efficient, that Henry the Fourth gratefully attributed his triumph to her assistance. A more liberal distribution of her succours would often have been agreeable to him, yet, as he could not but admire a conduct so wise, and dictated by maxims so congenial to his own, he continued her steady and sincere friend to the end of her life. Accustomed as we have been, in the present age, to see vast expeditions undertaken against our continental enemies, and vast subsidies

* Rymer, Vol. XVI.

thrown, without reflection, into the hands of our allies; we may be apt to look on this policy of Elizabeth's government as timid and ungenerous. Yet, with an expence of men and money, almost too trifling to be perceptible, it procured, for England, advantages, greater perhaps than would have resulted from mighty armaments, and lavish disbursements. Her Protestant allies were not alarmed by the overwhelming succours of an ancient enemy, nor rendered odious in the sight of their countrymen, by a too evident dependence on a foreign power. The French people were not roused to any general combination against her, from the apprehension of passing under her yoke, or sustaining the dismemberment of their territory.

Policy towards Scotland.

The policy which the English government pursued with respect to Scotland, led to some of the most questionable incidents of Elizabeth's reign. That country, narrow and thinly peopled as it was, required the incessant attention of its southern neighbour. England, divided from the rest of the world by stormy seas, on which her own fleets now began to ride triumphant, could not be assailed without the most imminent hazard. As a foreign enemy, surrounded by an uncertain element and annoyed by her fleets, which might eventually cut off both his supplies and his retreat, could hope for safety only from her entire subjugation; the preparations requisite for such an enterprise would be

too vast to be long concealed, and too protracted to be completed before her plans for defence should be matured. But against Scotland she was aided by no such bulwark: in that country stood an array of combatants, dexterous in regular warfare, and separated from her only by a fordable river, or an imaginary line; they might assemble and invade her in force, before the news of their approach could reach the seat of government. Even if her hasty levies should succeed in repelling the incursion, still the enemy might retire to his own country, loaded with booty, and secure from pursuit; while the loss of a battle might expose all her northern counties to devastation.

These, the permanent dangers from an enemy in the north, were at this time increased by circumstances of great importance. Since Mary, the youthful Queen of Scotland, had espoused the heir apparent to the throne of France, the counsels and energies of both these countries were under the control of her ambitious maternal uncles, the princes of Lorraine. The enterprises which these daring leaders had planned, led them to exert the whole of their power in attempting to dethrone Elizabeth. They had founded their plans on standing forth as the champions of the church, and leaders of the Catholic league; while the power of Elizabeth formed the great bulwark of the Protestants. Nor did their means seem inadequate to the mighty

undertaking of subverting her throne, and acquiring the uncontrolled sway of the three kingdoms. The title of their niece, Mary, to the throne of England, was accounted preferable to that of Elizabeth by all good Catholics, who held the marriage of Henry with Catharine to be indissoluble, unless by the authority of the pope. The portion of the English people which still adhered to the Romish communion was considerable, while the favourers of the Reformation in Scotland seemed as yet no ways formidable. If heresy could there be checked in the bud, and the whole Scottish nation rendered the partisans of their cause; the princes of Lorraine had grounds for expectations by no means chimerical. From France, from Spain, and the other countries which abetted the Catholic league, they might hope to pour into Scotland such a body of disciplined troops, as, uniting with the natives, and entering England on her defenceless side, should disperse the raw levies of Elizabeth, and place their niece on her throne.

These intentions were manifested by the first movements in the gigantic plan. No sooner was the death of Mary of England announced in France, than the Queen of Scots and her husband endeavoured to keep alive the hopes of their partisans, by assuming the arms and title of King and Queen of England. This parade proved rather injurious than useful to the projects of the house of Guise,

by discovering their designs, and putting their enemies on their guard; but more energetic measures were, in conformity to their counsels, adopted by their sister, the Queen Dowager and Regent of Scotland. That princess, naturally moderate and politic, had hitherto pursued a system so mild and conciliating, as had, in a great measure, lulled the dangerous dissensions of her country. Now, however, from an undue subserviency to the designs of her brothers, the fatal error of her character, she began to attempt the extirpation of Protestantism, by mingling a cruelty which should have shocked her humanity, with a faithlessness from which her moral feelings ought to have revolted. The sufferers at length betook themselves to arms; but the vigour and dexterity of the regent, supported by a body of veteran French troops, soon compelled them to implore assistance from the common protectress of the Reformation.

There were certain circumstances which rendered Elizabeth much less forward in their support than her interest seemed to demand. The principles of the Scottish Protestants, especially in regard to the form of worship, went far beyond her ideas of reformation; and the strong tincture of republicanism, which appeared in their politics, rendered them, in her eyes, suspected and dangerous. To abet rebellious subjects, is always a delicate undertaking for sovereigns; but in a country so closely

connected with her own, by vicinity, language, and manners, it seemed most unsafe to encourage the supporters of those civil and religious principles, which, at home, all her authority was employed to suppress. * To these dissuasives, her love of economy gave additional force; since it was manifest that the necessities of the Scots would require considerable supplies, while their poverty left her no hope of reimbursement.

It was, we are informed, by the representations of Cecil, that she at length permitted these considerations to give way to others still more urgent and important. Two papers, written with his own hand, and still preserved, contain the reasonings in which he explained to the Queen and her council the propriety and necessity of interfering in the affairs of Scotland. † Setting out with the principle that every society has a right to provide for its security both against present and future dangers, and to turn against its enemies the means employed by them for its annoyance; he proceeds to show, that the safety of England could be secured only by sending powerful and immediate assistance to the Scottish Protestants. Elizabeth felt the force of these arguments; but her first

* Elizabeth's Letter to the Earl of Beldford, in Appendix, No. XIII. to Robertson's Scotland.

† Burnet, Vol. III. Appendix.

succours, consisting in some small remittances of money, were so inadequate, as to produce no effect in favour of her friends. Afterwards, however, when Scotland could not otherwise be rescued from entire subjugation by her enemies, she formed with the Protestants a league offensive and defensive; sent a powerful fleet to guard the Forth against reinforcements from France, and, by the aid of a land force, enabled the Scots to drive the French from the field, and besiege them in their last refuge at Leith.

This timely and vigorous effort, in support of the Scottish Protestants, led to a treaty in which Cecil and Dr Wotton, the plenipotentiaries of Elizabeth, partly from their talents, partly from the desperate situation of their enemies, procured the most advantageous terms for their allies. The Scottish parliament, of which the great majority now adhered to the reformed faith, obtained almost the whole direction of public affairs. It was stipulated, that this assembly should meet and act with the same full powers as if formally convoked by the sovereign: that, during the absence of their young queen, the administration should be vested in twelve commissioners, of which the queen should select seven, and the parliament five, out of twenty-four persons named by the parliament: that, without the consent of this assembly, neither war should be declared nor peace concluded: that the French

troops should be immediately removed to their own country, and the fortresses of Leith and Dunbar, then in their possession, demolished: that in future no foreign troops should be introduced, and no fort erected, without the permission of parliament: that no foreigner should hereafter be advanced to any place of trust or dignity in the kingdom: and that there should be a general act of amnesty for those who had opposed the measures of government. The security of the Protestant faith was fully provided for by an article which left all matters respecting religion to the decision of parliament.*

The politic moderation of Elizabeth and her ministers was conspicuous in the articles stipulated for England. The English forces as well as the French were to be withdrawn from Scotland; former treaties were renewed, and the only additional article was, that the right of Elizabeth to the English throne should be formally acknowledged, Mary and her husband ceasing, from thence forward, to assume the title, or bear the arms of England. Elizabeth had indeed enjoined her plenipotentiaries to demand five hundred thousand crowns, and the restitution of Calais, as a compensation for the indignity already offered to her, by the assumption of her arms and title: but these conditions, to which

* Keith, 137. Rymer, Vol. XV. p. 593.

the French commissioners had no power to agree, were at length referred to future discussion. *

At so small an expence, and with an exertion so trivial, compared to the magnitude of the object, did the English government, by its vigour and sagacity, succeed in giving a complete ascendancy to its Protestant allies in Scotland. And when the Catholic religion was abolished, and the reformed established by law, that country, instead of affording particular facilities to the enemies of Elizabeth, became a new bulwark to her throne.

Policy towards Mary Queen of Scots.

The return of Mary to Scotland, and her assumption of the reins of government, led to plans of policy, in which the passions of Elizabeth interfered so much with the dictates of her understanding, and the counsels of her ministers; that we are bewildered amidst the effects of an irresolution, duplicity, and contradiction, which her usual systematic procedure does not prepare us to expect. The unfortunate Mary undertook the administration of her kingdom in circumstances, where the sagacity of experience, and the coolness of age, could scarcely have conducted, to a successful issue, the delicate interests committed to youth and indiscretion. Her subjects, still in the ferment of a religious revolution, entertained violent prejudices

* See Letter of Elizabeth to Cecil and Wotton, in Lodge's Illustrations of British History, Vol. I. p. 338.

against their sovereign. It was fresh in their recollection, that the cruel persecutions, from which they had just escaped, were carried on at the instigation of Mary's uncles, and under the authority of her mother; and they knew that plans were concerted by the house of Guise for the final extirpation of the Protestant religion. Unfortunately they had too strong reasons to suspect that their queen, devoted to popery and to the will of her uncles, would not scruple to concur in the most dangerous designs. Stimulated by these considerations, they scrutinized every step of her conduct with the most jealous care: and as the rudeness of manners in that age had been heightened by the convulsions and dangers of a revolution, they treated her with a harshness, which, in her eyes, might well appear indignity to a sovereign, and brutality to a woman.

Mary, educated in the polished, gay, and arbitrary court of France, was equally shocked with the coarseness of the Scots, the moroseness of their manners, and the republican principles which they had imbibed with their new religion. Nor were her more serious thoughts less outraged than her taste. While scarcely allowed to exercise, in her private chapel, those rites to which she was fondly attached, she daily heard them treated with insulting contumely, and herself reproached as a deluded and desperate idolatress. With a spirit too

high, and with passions too lively to submit to such mortification, or to win the confidence of her people by a train of prudent and conciliating measures; she endeavoured, in the conversation and amusements of a few favourite domestics, to recall her former scenes of enjoyment, and to lose the recollection of her present hardships. But by a peculiar infelicity, the attachments of Mary were more fatal to her happiness than even her aversions; and the unworthy objects, on whom her affection was successively fixed, proved the principal means of precipitating her ruin. By her choice of a youth, whose head and heart were no less defective than his external appearance was captivating, a Catholic in his creed, and a libertine in his morals, she shocked the pious, and alienated the wise:* and when her infatuated fondness was soon succeeded by unconquerable aversion, the change was attributed, not to the return of reason, but the fickleness of passion. The confidence and familiarity, with which she distinguished an unworthy minion, seemed to argue a strange depravity of taste; which her enemies readily accounted for, by supposing a still stranger depravity of morals. But when, in opposition to the united voice of her subjects, to all laws divine and human, she bestowed her affections on

* See Letter from Randolph to Leicester, in Appendix XI. to Robertson's Scotland.

the murderer of her husband, screened him from the vengeance of outraged justice, and made him the partaker of her bed and her authority; the indignation of her subjects could no longer be kept within the bounds of allegiance. They took up arms against her, formally deposed her from the sovereignty, and finally compelled her to seek for refuge in England.

During these transactions, the interference of the English government was hesitating, indecisive, and contradictory. The confidential ministers of Elizabeth, strongly tinctured with the religious opinions of the Scottish reformers, and looking on the ascendancy of Mary as the chief source of danger to their government, appear to have been unanimously of opinion that the Scottish Protestants ought to be supported; and their queen, if not dethroned, at least involved in perpetual difficulties. Had Elizabeth consulted merely her personal feelings towards Mary, her measures would have been no less hostile than the counsels of her ministers. Her resentment against a competitor who had assumed her title, and affected to consider her birth as illegitimate, was aggravated by hatred of a rival who eclipsed her in those personal charms of which she was no less tenacious than of her sovereignty. The animosity thus fostered in her breast became apparent on various occasions. When Mary, on her return from France to her

own dominions, solicited a safe conduct from Elizabeth, this request, although a mere matter of complaisance, was refused by the latter, with an ill-humour which seemed to indicate very unfriendly intentions. * In the same manner, every overture for the marriage of the Scottish queen was industriously counteracted by her jealous neighbour; and when Darnley at length became the object of her choice, Elizabeth reproached her with this marriage, as with a crime against herself and her government. Nor did Mary take any measures to conciliate a rival whom she looked on as the usurper of her rights, and the enemy of her person and religion. She refused to ratify that article of the treaty of Edinburgh by which she was bound to renounce her claims to the English throne; and she occasionally expressed her indignation, with more frankness than prudence, against the ill-concealed malignity of Elizabeth. †

Yet, notwithstanding her personal animosity to Mary, the queen of England was far from entering cordially into the views of the Scottish Protestants. Their tenets, both civil and religious, so nearly allied to those of her own puritans, were the object of her decided aversion; their ascendancy was the last means by which she wished the

* See Appendix VI. to Robertson's Scotland.

† Keith, App. 159.

humiliation of her rival. The imprudent attachments, and the consequent unpopularity and ignominy of the Scottish queen, probably afforded her more satisfaction than regret; and it appears that her ambassadors, of themselves well-inclined to the task, were encouraged in fomenting the dissensions between the court and the people of Scotland. But when the "Congregation" proceeded to try their sovereign for the crimes of which she was accused, and to deprive her of her throne and her liberty, in consequence of their own award, the high monarchical sentiments of Elizabeth were alarmed. She sternly demanded an explanation of their presumptuous conduct; and as their republican justification was even more offensive to her than their measures, she endeavoured by threats to procure the release and restoration of their sovereign. She seems even to have formed the resolution of attempting this object by force of arms, in opposition to the strenuous remonstrances of Cecil and her other ministers, who represented the danger of employing her arms to crush her most useful friends, and reinstate her mortal enemy. So thoroughly were the Scottish Protestants convinced of her alienation from their interests, that they refused her ambassador admittance to their captive queen, and prepared to support themselves by other alliances. Already had their overtures been favourably received by the French, who made

no scruple of abandoning Mary, provided they could maintain their ascendancy in Scotland; and the English resident had repeatedly warned his court of this danger, inevitable, unless Elizabeth should alter her conduct towards the Scottish Protestants. *

The escape of Mary from confinement, and her subsequent retreat into England, produced a new course of policy on the part of Elizabeth. Her confidential ministers, more alive to the supposed interests of their country and religion than to the dictates of generosity, seem to have been unanimously of opinion, that the Scottish queen, instead of being aided by Elizabeth against her subjects, should, under specious pretences, be detained in a lasting captivity. † Her enmity to the Protestant religion, and to Elizabeth, they considered implacable; and were she restored by the arms of England to her throne, she would not, they thought, scruple to turn her regained authority against her benefactors. On the other hand, her detention

1568.

Advice of Cecil to Elizabeth.

* See a Letter from Sir Nicholas Throgmorton to Cecil, in Appendix XXI. to Robertson's Scotland. Also from the same to Queen Elizabeth, *ibid.*

† Lodge, Vol. II. p. 4, 5. A remarkable Letter from the Earl of Sussex to Cecil, written so early after the flight of Mary as the 22d of October 1568, and containing an urgent exhortation to that very policy which was afterwards pursued with regard to her, is inserted in Appendix IV. Also the deliberations of Cecil on the same subject.

would give the English government a complete control over the affairs of Scotland; for the Scottish Protestants would not fail to respect her will, while she had their queen in her hands, and could punish them by restoring an exasperated sovereign to their throne. Nor did they see how these advantages could be attained by a procedure less harsh than the captivity of Mary. To refuse her an asylum would be replete with danger: that high-spirited princess would not fail to raise France and Spain in her cause; to procure from their willing ambition large forces for her restoration; and, stimulated both by ancient and recent animosities, to employ her recovered power in hostility to England.

These representations produced a powerful impression on Elizabeth, confirmed as they were by certain peculiarities in the situation of her rival, which admitted of severe measures being taken against her, without compromising the cause of sovereigns, or exciting general indignation against herself. Mary was accused of a crime horrible to mankind,—participation in the murder of her husband; and her marriage with his reputed murderer had impressed a belief of her guilt, not easily to be effaced. While she laboured under the general indignation, her detention would be applauded by many, and warmly resented by none. On the other hand, the throne, if upheld as a sanctuary

for such crimes, would become odious in the eyes of all; and Elizabeth, in supporting such a tenet, would weaken her own authority while she outraged the feelings of mankind.

Feelings of Elizabeth towards Mary.

These considerations made Elizabeth determine to detain the Scottish queen, not as a royal guest, who had come to claim her protection, but as a prisoner brought by happy accident into her power. From this commencement, her hatred to Mary progressively increased by a variety of causes. Conscious that the detention of Mary was a new source of resentment, the commission of the injury became a cause for its aggravation. Deriving, from the ill-advised concessions, and subsequent retractations of the Scottish queen, a semblance of right to judge in her cause, and a colour for assuming her guilt as undeniable, both she and her people came gradually to regard the captive less as a sovereign princess, than as a criminal subject of England. The mind of Elizabeth was perpetually agitated by the apprehension of her prisoner's escape, and more than once, by the discovery of conspiracies, which Mary incautiously countenanced. All these proved new incentives to her hatred, and prompted her to a measure from which her tenderness for the rights of sovereigns would at first have made her revolt with horror.

From the letters and the conduct of Elizabeth in regard to Mary, we perceive that she aimed at two

irreconcileable objects. She longed for the destruction of her dangerous prisoner, and she no less earnestly desired to have it accomplished without her apparent concurrence or connivance. She seems to have long hoped that Mary would sink under the rigours of her confinement, or fall a sacrifice to the discontent of her keeper. The Earl of Shrewsbury, to whose custody she was entrusted, was subjected to great restraint and privation. Although entirely devoted to Elizabeth, and sufficiently willing to deprive Mary of every enjoyment, * his disposition was rendered still more narrow and intractable, by the severe and ungenerous usage which he experienced from his sovereign. The allowances which he received for the maintenance of the Queen of Scots were so inadequate, that the deficiency impaired his private fortune; and after many years of this unprofitable charge, when he at length expected some signal mark of royal bounty, to his inexpressible astonishment and mortification, he received an order from court, by which his appointments, instead of being increased, were diminished one half. † When the retrenchments which this strange piece of econo-

* See Shrewsbury's Letter to Lord Burghley, in Lodge, Vol. II. p. 68.

† Letters from the same to the same, ibid. p. 244, 270, 272.

my naturally led him to make in the diet and accommodations of Mary, were complained of by the French ambassador, Shrewsbury received a letter from court, expressing the displeasure of his queen in strong terms, but containing no intimation that his former allowances would be restored. *

Other circumstances concurred to make Shrewsbury dissatisfied with his charge. As his whole time and attention were occupied in watching over his prisoner, his private affairs were neglected; and his tenants, in various parts of the country, taking advantage of his situation, contrived to evade his claims, by involving him in troublesome law-suits. † If he ventured on an excursion from the residence of Mary, he was sure to be reminded,‡ by a severe reprimand, of his duty. § If a friend happened to pay him a visit, a letter full of insinuations, showed him that the jealousy of his sovereign was roused. At length, by a strange excess of severity, his very children were not permitted to visit him; and he was almost reduced to despair, when his earnest entreaties, seconded by the friendship of Cecil,

* Letter from Leicester to Shrewsbury, in Lodge, Vol. II. p. 253.

† Letter from the Earl of Shrewsbury, ibid. p. 275. ‡ Ibid.

§ Letter from Shrewsbury to the queen, ibid. p. 246.

and some of the other ministers, procured his release from an intolerable bondage. *

To Sir Amias Paulet, one of the gentlemen to whom the royal prisoner was afterwards committed, Elizabeth seems to have given a much more explicit intimation of her wishes. Paulet had entered into the loyal association for bringing to punishment all pretenders to the throne, who should attempt her life; and she seemed to expect that he would rid her of her enemy, without subjecting her to the necessity, which she so earnestly wished to avoid, of actually signing the death-warrant. † This gentleman refused to be her instrument in so base a deed, which she would have both disavowed and punished; and no other course remained, but to authorize the execution of the sentence against Mary; but Elizabeth affected the utmost reluctance to a step which her Parliament and people, who heartily hated and dreaded the Queen of Scots, so earnestly pressed. To such a length were her hopes of deceiving mankind by this duplicity carried, that, even after having deliberately signed the warrant, and delivered it to Davison, her Secretary of State, she pretended, on hearing that it was actually executed, the utmost

* Letter from Shrewsbury to Lord Burghley, in Lodge, Vol. II. p. 247. Letter from the same, p. 248.

† Secretary Davison's Apology, in Camden's Annals, p. 545.

astonishment, grief, and indignation. Loudly accusing the secretary of having surreptitiously sent off the warrant, in direct opposition to her inclination, she caused the unfortunate man to be subjected, on this charge, to a heavy fine, which she levied, to his utter ruin.

Distress caused to Cecil by the affairs of Mary.

If the part which Cecil bore in these transactions has brought censure on his memory, it brought no less unhappiness on his mind. His opinion respecting the Queen of Scots, and the manner of her treatment, coincided with those of his colleagues in office. While he looked on her as the most dangerous enemy of his sovereign and his religion, he considered her liberty, and even her life, as scarcely compatible with the safety of either. Yet her confinement freed him neither from anxiety nor danger; his vigilance was incessantly occupied in counteracting the plots of her partizans, which aimed to involve himself and his queen in one destruction. Mary even proved a source of disquietude to him, in a way which he could least have expected. Having, from motives of humanity, obtained Elizabeth's reluctant consent, that the captive queen, whose health had suffered much from confinement, should be carried to Buxton Wells for her recovery,* he happened, during her stay there, to visit the same place for

* Letter from Cecil to Shrewsbury, in Lodge, Vol. II. p. 111.

the relief of his own complaints. His jealous sovereign, connecting this accidental meeting with his frequent applications to mitigate the severities practised against Mary, (for he was averse to all unnecessary harshness,) conceived the strange suspicion, that he had a private understanding with the Queen of Scots, and had repaired to Buxton for the purpose of maturing some treacherous project. * Nor was this chimerical surmise the transient apprehension of a moment. On his return to court, he was charged by Elizabeth with this imaginary intrigue, in terms most injurious to his tried fidelity; and he found it prudent to decline a match between his daughter and the son of the Earl of Shrewsbury, the keeper of Mary, and the supposed agent in their secret negotiations. †

But while thus strangely suspected by Elizabeth, Cecil was, above all others, obnoxious to the partisans of Mary. Having been the chief means of discovering and overthrowing the conspiracies of Norfolk, he was reproached as the cause of that popular nobleman's death; though the repetition of the duke's treasonable attempts, after he had once been pardoned, seemed to render him no fit object of royal clemency. To consider Cecil as his private enemy, seems altogether unfair. He was in-

* Letter from Cecil to Shrewsbury, in Lodge, Vol. II. p. 130.
† Ibid. p. 130.

strumental in procuring the pardon of Norfolk after his first offence; he endeavoured, by salutary counsels, to dissuade him from the prosecution of his pernicious schemes; and, in some of his writings, which still remain, he laments the infatuation of his Grace, which rendered all good subjects his public enemies, however they might respect his private virtues. * Yet the whole odium of Norfolk's death was thrown on him; and the general reproach was countenanced by the unblushing duplicity of Elizabeth. That princess, though she had authorized the execution without any reluctance, was anxious to have it believed that she had only yielded to the importunities of Cecil. The minister was, for some time after, treated as a person who had deluded her into an act repugnant to her nature; and he was not received again into her presence and favour, until she thought that appearances were sufficiently satisfied. But he had yet to connect a private and deeper affliction with the fate of Norfolk. One of Cecil's daughters was unfortunately married to a profligate husband, the Earl of Oxford: that young nobleman, much attached to Norfolk, threatened his father-in-law, that, unless he would undertake to procure the duke's pardon, he would do all in his power to

* Camden, p. 255. Lloyd's State Worthies, p. 540. Burleigh's Meditation on the reign of Elizabeth, &c.

ruin his daughter. This threat he executed with inhuman punctuality: and after having deserted her bed, and squandered his fortune in the most abandoned courses, he brought, by a train of barbarous usage, his innocent victim to an untimely grave.*

The selfish Elizabeth felt no remorse in attempting to load Cecil with the odium of the execution of Mary, as well as of Norfolk. He appears to have had no greater share in advising it than the other ministers; but as he was accounted a principal enemy of the Queen of Scots, Elizabeth judged that an imputation against him would be most readily received; and with this ungenerous view, she banished him from her presence, and treated him with all the harshness due to an unfaithful counsellor. Cecil appears, on this occasion, to have been seriously alarmed; ministers were not, in that age, protected against the crown, and the misfortunes of Secretary Davison, then passing before his eyes, proved to him that, if Elizabeth should account a further sacrifice necessary for her purposes, little was to be expected either from her justice or gratitude. But as the sincerity of her indignation had been testified, sufficiently for political purposes, by the ruin of Davison, and as the services of Cecil were too useful to be dispensed

* Dugdale's Baronage, Vol. II. p. 169.

with, she suffered herself to be at length mollified, and received him again into favour.*

Uniformity of Cecil's policy.

We have now taken a survey of the part acted by Cecil in regard to religion, to domestic, and to foreign policy. A striking characteristic, and one hardly ever possessed to an equal degree by other statesmen, was a uniformity in his plans, the result of a mind always cool and deliberate, seldom blinded by prejudice, and never precipitated by passion. On some occasions we may dissent from his opinion, and in a few, we may suspect the qualities of his heart: but, in general, we must allow that the measures, which Elizabeth pursued in opposition to his sentiments, were the chief defects of her government; while those, which she adopted in conformity to his counsels, produced the boasted prosperity and glory of her reign.

His mortifications.

It has long since been observed, that the most successful statesman is scarcely an object of envy; that his pre-eminence is dearly purchased by unceasing disquietudes, and that his honours are an inadequate compensation for his mortifications and dangers. While nations, like individuals, are liable to be agitated by violent passions, and misled by false views of interest, the advocate of moderation

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* Strype's Annals, Vol. III. p. 376.

and peace is often the object of popular reproach. Such was not unfrequently the case of Cecil. So wildly were the minds of men possessed with the prospect of military glory and Mexican gold, that his opposition to the continuance of the Spanish war subjected him even to personal danger from the populace. The more violent among the clergy, because he attempted to restrain their persecuting spirit, reviled him as a puritan in disguise, as a secret enemy to the church; while the more zealous dissenters were no less suspicious of his endeavours to persuade them into conformity. From his supposed influence in public affairs, the enemies of government were also his personal enemies. The friends of Mary Queen of Scots, and the partisans of the popish religion, regarded him as their capital foe; and not satisfied with incessantly defaming him by libels, they attempted more than once to take him off by assassination. In one of these attempts, for which two assassins were executed, the Spanish ambassador was suspected to have been concerned, and was, in consequence, ordered to depart the kingdom.

His influence with Elizabeth exposed him to equal hatred from the majority of the courtiers. The Earl of Leicester was at the head of all the intrigues against him, and made, on one occasion, a bold effort to accomplish his ruin. In concert with the principal courtiers, he planned that Cecil

should be unexpectedly accused before the privy-council, arrested without the knowledge of the queen, and immediately sent to the Tower. When thus removed from the queen's presence, abundance of accusations, it was imagined, might be procured to elicit her consent to his trial and condemnation. * This plot had nearly reached its accomplishment, and Cecil was resisting his accusers in the privy-council with very little effect; when Elizabeth, who had been privately informed of the design, suddenly entered the room, and addressed, to the astonished counsellors, one of those appalling reprimands, which were more distinguished for vigour than delicacy. †

Offices and honours.

As a compensation for these disquietudes, and a recompense for his services, we should not be surprised to find Cecil loaded with the favours of his sovereign. But that princess was proverbially frugal of her rewards. Her love of economy was frequently carried to a blameable excess, and her confidential ministers abridged of the means to serve her with advantage. There remain various letters of Sir Francis Walsingham, complaining of his being wholly unable, on his scanty appointments, to support his establishment, though very inadequate to his quality of ambassador in France. ‡

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 19.

† Camden's Annals, Eliz.

‡ Harleian MSS. in British Museum, No. 260.

Other ministers had equal reason for complaint; and there were many more fortunes spent than made in her service. In the distribution of honours her frugality was no less conspicuous, and could be ascribed only to sound policy, uninfluenced by meaner motives. Aware that titles, unless accounted indicative of real merit in those on whom they were bestowed, would cease to confer distinction, she distributed them with a careful and sparing hand; and the honours of the Earl of Leicester afford perhaps a solitary instance, in her reign, of a title acquired without desert. A title from Elizabeth was consequently a real reward, and was deemed an adequate retribution for the most important services.

If Cecil was better rewarded than the other ministers, we must own that his claims were greater; and we shall find that the favours which he received were neither hastily bestowed, nor carried beyond his merits. In consequence of his efforts in repressing the rebellion which attended the
1569. Duke of Norfolk's first conspiracy, he was created a baron, the highest title he ever attained. The other favours which he received, consisting in official situations, could hardly be denominated rewards, since they brought him additional business, which he executed with punctuality and diligence. After concluding the treaty of Edinburgh, he was appointed Master of the Wards, an office in virtue

of which he had to preside in the Court of Wards, and to determine a variety of questions between the sovereign and the subject. Eleven years afterwards, Lord Burleigh (such was his new title) was raised to the office of Lord High Treasurer, which, along with great dignity, brought him an immense addition of complicated business. An accumulation of offices in the hands of one man naturally led to much envy, and was certainly a very blameable precedent; but the fidelity and ability with which he executed their duties must, in his case, alleviate the censure of posterity.

Political characteristics.

Lord Burleigh continued minister during a period of unexampled length, and in an age when men in office were exposed to the rudest assaults of faction and intrigue. To investigate the means by which he maintained his station cannot fail to be instructive, devoid, as they were, of the craft and subtlety so frequently connected with the name of politician. The arts to which he owed his success were not less honourable than skilful, and would have raised him to influence and reputation in the walks of private life. For nothing was he more remarkable than for his unremitting diligence and scrupulous punctuality. Whatever the engagements of others, whether the pursuit of pleasure, or the cabals of the court, Burleigh was always found at his post, intensely occupied with the duties of office and the cares of government.

Diligence and punctuality.

A young courtier of those times, while describing the intrigues with which all around him were busied, observes, "My Lord Treasurer, even after the old manner, dealeth with matters of state only, and beareth himself very uprightly." * The degree of his industry may be estimated from its effects, which were altogether wonderful. As principal Secretary of State, and, for a considerable time, as sole Secretary, he managed a great proportion of the public business, both foreign and domestic: he conducted negociations, planned expeditions, watched over the machinations of internal enemies, employed private sources of intelligence, assisted at the deliberations of the privy-council and parliament, and wrote many tracts on the state of affairs. When created Lord High Treasurer, his concern with the general affairs of government continued, while he had, moreover, to attend to the receipts and disbursements of the nation, to devise means for replenishing the treasury, and to sit occasionally in the Court of Exchequer, as judge between the people and the officers of the revenue. As Master of the Court of Wards, he had much judicial occupation during term, for his equitable decisions brought before him an unusual accumulation of suits. Nor did he neglect those numer-

* Letter from Gilbert Talbot to the Earl of Shrewsbury, in Lodge, Vol. II. p. 100.

ous petitions with which he was perpetually importuned, some demanding the reward of services, others imploring the redress of injuries; and, amidst all these avocations, his private affairs were managed with the same precision as those of the state.

All this load of business, he was enabled, by assiduous application and exact method, to dispatch without either hurry or confusion. In conformity to his favourite maxim, that "the shortest way to do many things is to do only one thing at once," he finished each branch of business before he proceeded to another, and never left a thing undone with the view of recurring to it at a period of more leisure. In the courts where he presided, he dispatched as many causes in one term as his predecessors in a twelvemonth.* When pressed with an accumulation of affairs, which frequently happened, he rather chose to encroach on the moderate intervals usually allowed to his meals and his sleep, than to omit any part of his task. Even when labouring under pain, and in danger of increasing his malady, he frequently caused himself to be carried to his office, for the dispatch of business. An eye-witness assures us that, during a period of twenty-four years, he never saw him idle for half an hour together; † and if he had no particular

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 21. † Ibid. p. 24.

task to execute, which rarely happened, he would still busy himself in reading, writing, or meditating. * By incessant practice, he acquired a facility and dispatch, which seemed altogether wonderful to idle courtiers; it proved of incalculable advantage to government, and to himself it gave a decided superiority over his less industrious rivals.

His reserve in public affairs.

Next to his unequalled diligence and punctuality, we are to rank his invincible reserve, whenever reserve was necessary. While he avoided that system of deception, by which statesmen have so often undertaken to gain their ends, he succeeded in concealing his real views, by the mere maintenance of a guarded secrecy. Perfectly impenetrable to the dexterous agents who were employed to sound him, his unattered countenance and unembarrassed motions afforded no means to divine the impressions produced on him by any communications. Equally hopeless was the attempt to arrive at his political secrets by procuring access to his most intimate friends; for he had no confidents. † "Attempts," he said, "are most likely to succeed when planned deliberately, carried secretly, and executed speedily." ‡

The resolution with which he could persevere in his reserve was remarkably exemplified in his

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 65. † Ibid. p. 64.
‡ Ibid. p. 69.

silence with respect to the succession to the throne. Three rival families at that time claimed this splendid inheritance, the houses of Suffolk and Hastings, and the royal line of Scotland; the title of either might have been rendered preferable by an act of parliament. But Burleigh saw the danger of declaring in favour of one or other. All were at present restrained from improper attempts by their expectations; but if the intentions of the queen were once known, the disappointed families might be apt to embrace those violent measures, from which alone they could then hope for success. He determined therefore to maintain a profound silence on this delicate question; and the queen, probably in consequence of his counsels, adopted and persevered in the same resolution, in spite of all the remonstrances with which she was assailed. The parliament often attempted to force a disclosure of her sentiments, and she and her minister found much difficulty in eluding their importunities: yet Burleigh carried his opinion with him to the grave, and Elizabeth disclosed hers only on her death-bed.

Moderation and self-command.

No statesman was ever more distinguished for self-command and moderation. Collected, calm, and energetic, in the most critical emergencies, he bore adversity without any signs of dejection, and prosperity without any apparent elevation.* Yet

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 30.

his coolness had in it nothing repulsive; and his self-command was chiefly exerted in repressing angry emotions. In council, he was always the strenuous advocate of moderate and conciliating measures; * and it was his particular boast that, notwithstanding the extent of his private as well as his public transactions, he had never sued, nor been sued by any man. † He bore the attacks of his opponents without any appearance of resentment, and in due season, embraced opportunities to promote their interest. When the Earl of Leicester, who had always thwarted his measures, and often calumniated his character, at length fell under the queen's displeasure, Burleigh successfully exerted himself to prevent his total loss of favour. ‡ Nor did he hesitate to form a cordial reconciliation with Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, who had long been one of his most dangerous enemies, and who had desisted from his practices only when he found Burleigh's power too firmly established to be shaken. Although Essex was his avowed and turbulent opponent, yet, when Elizabeth refused some just claim of that nobleman, the Lord Treasurer sup-

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* "Win hearts," he was accustomed to say to the queen, "and you have their hands and purses." Rushworth's Collections, Vol. I. p. 469.

† Bacon's Works, Vol. IV. p. 372.

‡ Letter of Lord Burghley in the Earl of Hardwicke's Miscellaneous State Papers, Vol. I. p. 329.

ported his cause with so much firmness, that the enraged queen at length bestowed on him some of those vehement epithets by which she made her courtiers feel her displeasure. * It was observed that he never spoke harshly of his enemies, nor embraced any opportunity of revenge: and as he was no less on his guard to avoid every undue bias from affection, it became a general remark that he was a better enemy than a friend. † "I entertain," he said, "malice against no individual whatever; and I thank God that I never retired to rest out of charity with any man." ‡

Patronage of men of talents.

Burleigh possessed great discernment in selecting, and great zeal in recommending, men of talent for public employments. He seemed resolved that England should be distinguished above all nations for the integrity of her judges, the piety of her divines, and the sagacity of her ambassadors. § It was he who discovered, and brought into office, Sir Francis Walsingham, so much distinguished, among the ministers of Elizabeth, for acuteness of penetration, extensive knowledge of public affairs, and profound acquaintance with human nature. The department of foreign affairs was long almost exclusively under the management of Burleigh, and

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* Birch's Memoirs, Vol. II. p. 147.

† Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 59.

‡ Ibid. § Ibid. p. 46, 55.

there is perhaps no period in the history of England, in which her intercourse with other countries was committed to such able hands, and in which her ambassadors confessedly excelled those of other nations in diplomatic talents. By this attention to merit and neglect of interest, the Treasurer naturally incurred much obloquy from those whom his penetration caused him to neglect; the nobility, in particular, expressed high displeasure at the preference so often given to commons, and seemed to think that offices which they could not execute, like honours which they had not earned, should be entailed on them and their descendants.

His desire of publicity.

Cecil was never the advocate of compulsory or arbitrary measures. Open discussion, far from being attended with danger, was, in his opinion, the most effectual and innocent means of expending the fury of faction; a forced silence seemed to him only to concenter and aggravate popular resentment. In the courts where he presided, he never gave a judgment without explaining the grounds on which he proceeded;* in matters of state, he refused to give his opinion, unless where he might bring forward and debate the reasons on which it was founded.† His influence was thus increased by all the weight of reason, and he omit-

His strict impartiality.

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 33.

† Ibid. p. 68.

ted no precaution to give it the sanction of impartiality. The solicitations of those who presumed most on his favour, from the ties of kindred or familiar acquaintance, he received with such coldness, that they were carefully avoided by those who knew him best, and never by any one repeated. If the cause of his friends was tried before him, he gave them rigid justice; if they sought preferment in the state, he did not obstruct their claims of merit; but he would listen to no application where partiality might blind his judgment, or blemish his integrity.*

In that age, the eyes of mankind were more strongly dazzled than at present by the splendour of rank; and a statesman was more likely to promote his views by attentions to the great. Yet, with Burleigh, the poor received equal measure with the wealthy, and had their suits as patiently heard, and as speedily determined. Each day in term, it was customary for him to receive from fifty to sixty petitions, all of which he commonly perused and weighed in the course of the evening or night, and was prepared to return an answer next morning, on his way to Westminster Hall. As soon as the petitioner mentioned his name, Burleigh found no difficulty in recollecting his business, and in delivering a reply. When at length

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 58.

confined to his bed by age and infirmities, and no longer able to attend at the courts, he directed that all petitions should be sent to him under seal; and as all were opened in the order in which they arrived, and answers immediately dictated, the lowest petitioner received his reply with the same dispatch as the highest. *

Vigilance and intelligence.

The early and complete intelligence which Burleigh possessed with regard to secret transactions, both at home and abroad, was spoken of with wonder by his contemporaries, and enabled him to adopt the promptest measures for counteracting all hostile attempts. At a period when invasion from abroad, and conspiracy at home, agitated by artful intriguers, and desperate bigots, it was no season to await, in careless slumber, the developement of events: but while we admire the extent and happy effects of his intelligence, we must hesitate to applaud the methods by which it was occasionally procured, and consider them as excusable only from the necessity of his situation. Obliged to maintain a number of spies, to reward informers, and to bribe accomplices to betray their associates, he might be condemned for resorting to nefarious arts, had they not been indispensable to the public safety, at a period when assassinations were so common, and when the doctrines of mental reserva-

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 22, 23.

tion, and of keeping no faith with heretics, were general tenets among the enemies of government.

Burleigh, by adhering inflexibly to the rule of living within his means, escaped those pecuniary embarrassments which often beset his less considerate colleagues. His income, considerable at an early age, became progressively increased by additional offices, and occasionally, by the mercantile adventures which in these days were usual among men of rank and fortune. It is a curious fact, that he invested large sums in the purchase of lead, for the purpose of re-sale.* Still he was exempt not only from corruption, but from selfishness; for an avaricious man would have made more by his offices in seven years than he made in forty; and the splendour of his expences was fully proportioned to his wealth and station.† So far, indeed, did he carry his disinterestedness, as never to raise his rents, nor displace his tenants. As the lands were let when he bought them, so they still remained; and some of his tenants continued to enjoy, for twenty pounds a-year, what might have been leased for two hundred.‡ Private expenditure.

The magnificence of his mode of life is to be Magnificence.

* Letter from Gilbert Talbot to the Earl of Shrewsbury, in Lodge, Vol. II. p. 211.

† Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 43.

‡ Ibid. p. 54, 55.

ascribed partly to policy, but more to the manners of the age, which, as we have seen in the case of the modest and unambitious More, made the expence of the great consist chiefly in a number of retainers. Burleigh had four places of residence, at each of which he maintained an establishment, his family and suite amounting to nearly a hundred persons. His domestic expences at his house in London were calculated at forty or fifty pounds a-week when he was present, and about thirty in his absence; princely allowances, when we consider the value of money at that period. His stables cost him a thousand marks a-year; his servants were remarked for the richness of their liveries. Retaining an appendage of ancient magnificence, which had now been given up, unless by a few noblemen of the first rank and fortune, he kept a regular table, with a certain number of covers for gentlemen, and two others for persons of inferior condition. These, always open, were served alike whether he was present or absent; and in correspondence with this proud hospitality, he had around him many young persons of distinction, who acted as his retainers, and lived in his family. Promotion was not yet attainable by open competition; the house of a minister was the grand preparatory school; and Burleigh was under Elizabeth, what Cardinal Morton had been under Henry VII. Among the retainers of Burleigh, there could, we

are told, be reckoned, at one time, twenty young gentlemen, each of whom possessed, or was likely to possess, an income of a thousand pounds; and among his household officers, there were persons who had property to the amount of ten thousand pounds.* His houses were not large, but his equipage and furniture were splendid; his plate is reported to have amounted to fourteen thousand pounds in weight, and about forty thousand pounds in value. His public entertainments corresponded with this magnificence. It was customary for Elizabeth to receive sumptuous entertainments from her principal nobility and ministers; and, on these instances of condescension, Burleigh omitted nothing which could show his sense of the honour conferred on him by his royal guest. Besides the short private visits which she often paid him, he entertained her in a formal manner twelve different times, with festivities which lasted several weeks, and, on each occasion, cost him two or three thousand pounds. His seat at Theobald's, during her stay, exhibited a succession of plays, sports, and splendid devices; and here she received foreign ambassadors, at the expence of her treasurer, in as royal state as at any

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 40. The writer of the treatise from which these particulars are taken was himself one of Lord Burghley's retainers, and an eye-witness of all these circumstances.

of her palaces. * This magnificence, doubtless, acquired him a considerable ascendancy both at court and among the people; but it was attended with much envy, and often brought him vexation. At his death, he left, besides his plate and furniture, eleven thousand pounds in money, and four thousand pounds a-year in lands, of which he had received only a small portion by inheritance. †

Conduct of Elizabeth towards him.

We come next to the interesting topic of his conduct towards Elizabeth, and the deportment of her majesty in return. He was often heard to say, that he thought there never was a woman so wise in all respects as Elizabeth; that she knew the state of her own and foreign countries better than all her counsellors; that, in the most difficult deliberations, she would surprise the wisest by the superiority of her expedients. ‡ His services, both before and after her elevation to the throne, were of the most important nature; for, besides his great qualities as a minister, his vigilance had repeatedly preserved her life, while his fidelity had endangered his own.

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* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 37, 38, 39, 40, 41. These protracted visits of Elizabeth to her principal courtiers seem to have had in view economy as well as popularity. She had no objection to honour her subjects by her presence, and she accounted it fair that they should pay for this honour.

† Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 44.

‡ Ibid. p. 71.

These services were sincerely felt by Elizabeth: with a magnanimity not always to be found among princes, she freely acknowledged her obligations, and demonstrated her gratitude by attentions which, from a sovereign, were the most flattering of rewards. Interesting herself in his domestic concerns, and entering into the joys and sorrows of his family, we find her at one time standing sponsor for one of his children, and at another hastening in person to inquire for his daughter in a sudden illness. In promoting the marriage of his son with a lady of rank and fortune, she also took an active part, and visited the lady in behalf of the suitor. Although extremely jealous of her real authority, Elizabeth had too much sense as well as policy to impede her service by unmeaning forms. When the treasurer, in the latter part of his life, was much afflicted with the gout, the queen always made him sit down in her presence with some obliging expression. "My Lord," she would say, "we make use of you, not for your bad legs, but for your good head." When the severity of his illness rendered him unable to quit his apartment, she repaired thither with her council to enjoy the benefit of his advice; and when his disease assumed a dangerous aspect, she appeared in person among the anxious inquirers for his health. *

* Birch's Memoirs, Vol. I. p. 294, 128. Lloyd's State Worthies.

Her majesty was, however, far from being always so accommodating; and it often required no small degree of patience to bear the effects of her violent passions and unreasonable caprice. The manners of that age were much less refined than those of the present; yet, even then, it appeared no ordinary breach of decorum in a queen to load her attendants with the coarsest epithets, or to vent her indignation in blows. The style of gallantry with which she encouraged her courtiers to approach her, both cherished this overbearing temper, and made her excesses be received rather as the ill-humour of a mistress than the affronts of a sovereign. It was customary for her statesmen and warriors to pretend not only loyalty to her throne, but ardent attachment to her person; and in some of Raleigh's letters, we find her addressed, at the age of sixty, with all the enthusiastic rapture of a fond lover.* To feign a dangerous distemper arising from the influence of her charms was deemed an effectual passport to her favour; and when she appeared displeased, the forlorn courtier took to his bed in a paroxysm of amorous despondency, and breathed out his tender melancholy in sighs and protestations. We find Leicester, and some other ministers, endeavouring to introduce one Dyer to her favour; and the means

* Cayley's Life of Raleigh, p. 127, 134. 4to edit.

which they employed was, to persuade her that a consumption, from which the young man had with difficulty recovered, was brought on by the despair with which she had inspired him.* Essex having, on one occasion, fallen under her displeasure, became exceedingly ill, and could be restored to health only by her sending him some broth, with kind wishes for his recovery. Raleigh, hearing of these attentions to his political rival, got sick in his turn, and received no benefit from any medicine till the same sovereign remedy was applied. With courtiers who submitted to act the part of sensitive admirers, Elizabeth found herself under no restraint: she expected from them the most unlimited compliance, and if they proved refractory, she gave herself up to all the fury of passion, and loaded them with opprobrious epithets.

Burleigh, by uniformly approaching her with the dignified demeanour of a grave and reserved counsellor, was far less liable to such indignities. Yet even on him she sometimes vented her chagrin; and, in moments of sudden violence, seemed to forget his age, his character, and his station. On one occasion, when, in opposition to her wish, he persisted in a resolution to quit the court a few days for the benefit of his health, she petulantly

* Letter of Gilbert Talbot to the Earl of Shrewsbury, in Lodge, Vol. LI. p. 101.

called him a froward old fool: * and when he ventured, as already has been mentioned, to maintain some claim of the Earl of Essex, which she had determined to disallow, she wrathfully reproached him as a miscreant and a coward who deserted her cause. † As he had generally to perform the disagreeable task of announcing to her any untoward accidents in the course of her affairs, he was exposed to the first ebullitions of her chagrin; and so much, we are told, did the unprosperous event of her plans for the tranquillization of Ireland, in 1594, irritate her mind, that she severely reproached her aged minister even while he laboured under sickness. ‡ But it was not only hasty bursts of passion that he had to dread: we have seen that, on particular occasions, she chose to execute her designs under a veil of consummate hypocrisy; and made no scruple to shield herself from public reproach by affecting resentment against her ministers for the very acts which had given her the highest gratification. Fortunately for Burleigh, she found means to satisfy appearances, without carrying her injustice to him beyond some temporary indignities.

These mortifications were aggravated by the obstinacy with which she occasionally opposed his

* Birch's Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth, Vol. I. p. 448.
† Ibid. Vol. II. p. 148. ‡ Ibid. Vol. I. p. 169.

designs. While certain counsellors, from attractions of person and manner, acquired at times an undue influence over her; some of her passions and prejudices were too powerful to be counteracted by his cool and rational suggestions; and it is alleged, that she, more than once, rejected his counsels, merely to prove to him that his ascendancy over her was not absolute.

Desirous frequently to resign.

The even temper of Burleigh enabled him to suffer many of these disgusts with apparent calmness; yet at times they exceeded his endurance. A very few years after the accession of Elizabeth, we find him already desiring to quit a station, in which his toil and mortification were so great.* As he advanced in life, his increasing bodily infirmities, and some domestic misfortunes which affected him very deeply, made such causes of chagrin more poignant; and he frequently solicited the queen to accept of his resignation. But that princess, though too impetuous to refrain from giving offence, could not endure to be deprived of the zeal, industry, and wisdom, on which she had so long relied with the most prosperous issue; and his resignation was a theme to which she could never be brought to listen. Laying aside the stateliness of the queen, she undertook to alter his purpose and

* Letter in Hardwicke's Miscellaneous State Papers, Vol. I. p. 170.

dispel his chagrin, by assuming the playfulness of the woman. There still remain several of her letters, in which she so artfully mingles strokes of gratitude and attachment with raillery, that it is no wonder the old statesman should have been moved by these indications of warm interest from his sovereign. *

Private life.

The private life of Burleigh may be discussed in a short compass. Hurried along, from an early period of life, amidst affairs too complicated not to require his utmost industry, too important not to engage all his attention; he had very little leisure for domestic enjoyments. His hours of relaxation were few, seldom exceeding what was necessary for the refreshment of nature; and if he at any time indulged in a greater cessation from his public labours, it was chiefly when his bodily infirmities demanded such an intermission, with a call not to be refused.

Recreations.

The principal scene of his amusements was his seat at Theobald's, near London, whither he fled with eagerness to enjoy the short intervals of leisure which he could snatch from public affairs. In these days the buildings had not extended so far; the house was surrounded with gardens, on which he had expended large sums of money, which were laid out under his own direction, with taste and

* Strype's Annals, Vol. IV. p. 77.

magnificence. Here he was often seen riding up and down the walks on his mule, enjoying the progress of his improvements, or overlooking those who amused themselves by shooting with arrows, or playing at bowls; but he never joined in these or any other diversions. The weakness of his constitution, and more especially the distempers of his feet and legs, disqualified him for active sports, even if he had been led to them by inclination: but his mind seems to have been so thoroughly engrossed by important business, that he had as little relish as leisure for amusements; nor did he play at any of those games with which the less busy endeavour to relieve the languor of existence. *

His principal and favourite recreation was reading. Books were to him what cards are to a great portion of the world; his frequent and most valued resource. They frequently interfered with the exercise necessary to his health; for when he got home to take a morning's ride, if he found a book which pleased him, he willingly postponed his excursion. † Nor was he insensible to the pleasures of

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 61.

† Ibid. p. 63, 64. It is curious to hear the peevishness with which learning is often cried down, even by those who derive from it the principal pleasures of their life. Though Burleigh found nearly all his recreation in books, in a letter to the Earl of Shrewsbury, he wishes that nobleman's son "all the good education that may be mete to teach him to fear God, love his natural father, and

domestic society and exhilarating conversation. At his table, in the company of a few select friends, or of his children and kinsmen, whom he always loved to see around him, he appeared to throw all his cares aside, and to yield himself up to unrestrained enjoyment. Whatever fatigue or anxiety, in the course of the day, his mind might have experienced from the pressure of public affairs, every uneasy circumstance seemed, at these periods, to be forgotten. His countenance was cheerful, his conversation lively; and those, who saw him only in these short intervals of relaxation, would have imagined that pleasure was the business of his life. As the mildness of his demeanour towards all ranks, in the intercourse of public life, procured him many friends; the frankness and familiarity which he displayed in his private circle gave a relish to his society. His conversation often sparkled with wit and gaiety, and his observations were generally not less pleasant than shrewd. The topics discussed at his table were various; literary conversation was preferred, politics were always avoided. * The magnificent style in which he lived, the number of his attendants, and the concourse of persons of distinc-

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to know his friends; *without any curiosity of human learning*, which, without the fear of God, doth great hurt to all youth in this time and age." Lodge, Vol. II. p. 133.

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 62, 63.

tion, seem, at first, adverse to the freedom of his social entertainments. But Burleigh was accustomed to live in a crowd; and few of his visitors were so exalted above him by rank, that he could not with grace relax himself in their presence.

A share in conversation was the chief pleasure which he enjoyed at table; for he was distinguished for temperance in an age when that virtue was not common. He ate sparingly, partook of few dishes, never drank above thrice at a meal, and very seldom of wine. Although the dinner hour in that age was not later than twelve or one o'clock, it was not uncommon with him to refrain from supper.* The gout, with which he was grievously tormented in the latter part of his life, probably contributed to render him more cautiously abstemious; if his temperance failed to banish this uneasy guest, he never at least encouraged its stay by rich wines and strong spices.† Temperance.

Nor was the private life of Burleigh destitute of nobler virtues. At a period when the poor had so few resources for their industry, and when many, willing to work, were reduced to want, a portion of his ample fortune was benevolently appropriated to their necessities. His certain and regular alms amounted to five hundred pounds a-year, besides Charity.

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 62, 63.
† Nugæ Antiquæ, Vol. II. p. 82.

farther and large disbursements on extraordinary occasions. Part was employed, under proper superintendence, in affording relief to poor prisoners, or in releasing honest debtors; the rest was confided to the management of certain parishes for the use of their most destitute inhabitants. From the low state of husbandry at that period, and the very limited intercourse between nations, one bad season was sufficient to subject a kingdom to the miseries of famine; corn, in certain districts, was sold at the most exorbitant prices, and rendered as inaccessible to the poorer classes, as if none had existed in the country. In such times of scarcity, then of frequent occurrence, and attended with consequences revolting to humanity, it was usual for Burleigh to buy up large quantities of corn, which he sold at low prices to the poor in the neighbourhood of his different seats; and by this well-judged assistance, relieved their necessities, without relaxing their industry. *

Piety. The mind of Burleigh appears to have been strongly tinctured with piety. Placed amidst dangers which his utmost vigilance could not always avoid, and from which he often escaped by unexpected accidents, his views were naturally extended to that power on whose will depended the dura-

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 38, 42.

tion of his life. His faith had been endeared to him by persecution; his piety was exalted by the sacrifice of his interest to religion. Regular in his attendance on public worship, and in the performance of his private devotions; he strove, both by example and influence, to inspire his family and connections with religious sentiments. During the greatest pressure of business, it was his custom, morning and evening, to attend prayers at the queen's chapel. When his increasing infirmities rendered him no longer able to go abroad, he caused a cushion to be laid by his bedside, and, on his knees, performed his devotions at the same regular hours. Unable at length to kneel, or to endure the fatigue of reading, he caused the prayers to be read aloud to him as he lay on his bed. * "I will trust," he said, "no man if he be not of sound religion, for he that is false to God can never be true to man." † The strictness of his morals was in correspondence with his piety, and both had a powerful effect in confirming his fortitude in times of peril. At the awful period when Philip was preparing his Armada, and when the utter destruction of the English government was confidently expected abroad, and greatly dreaded at home, Burleigh was uniformly collected and resolute; and when the mighty preparations of the Spaniards were spoken of in his

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 56. † Ibid. p. 68.

presence with apprehension, he replied with firmness, "they shall do no more than God will suffer them." *

Behaviour to his family and dependents.

In his intercourse with his family and dependents, this grave statesman was kind and condescending. In his leisure moments he delighted in sporting with his children, forbearing, however, such indications of intemperate fondness as might have rendered them regardless of his authority, and ready to give the rein to their caprices. In his old age no scene so much delighted him as to have his children, grand-children, and great-grand-children, collected around his table, and testifying their happiness by their good humour and cheerfulness. † While his eldest son passed into the rank of hereditary nobility, it was to his second son, Robert, that Burleigh turned an anxious eye as the heir of his talents and influence. Nor were his pains fruitlessly bestowed: ‡ Robert displayed abilities worthy of his father; and after rising, during his lifetime, to considerable trusts and employments in the state, succeeded him, under James I. as prime minister, under the title of Earl of Salisbury. The care with which Burleigh watched over the interests of this son appears from a

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 30. † Ibid. p. 60, 61.
‡ Bacon's Works, Vol. I. p. 376.

series of prudential advices, arranged in ten divisions, which he drew up for his use.*

For the improvement of his children, as well as for his own domestic happiness, Burleigh was chiefly indebted to his wife, the daughter of Sir Anthony Cook, a lady highly distinguished for her mental accomplishments. The plan of female education, which the example of Sir Thomas More had rendered popular, continued to be pursued among the superior classes of the community. The learned languages, which, in the earlier part of Elizabeth's reign, still contained every thing elegant in literature, formed an indispensable branch of a fashionable education; and many young ladies of rank could not only translate the authors of Greece and Rome, but even compose in Greek and Latin with considerable elegance. Sir Anthony Cook, a man eminent for his literary acquirements, and on that account appointed tutor to Edward the Sixth, bestowed the most careful education on his five daughters; and all of them rewarded his exertions by becoming not only proficients in literature, but distinguished for their excellent demeanour as mothers of families. Lady Burleigh was adorned with every quality which could excite

* This tract has been transmitted to posterity; and as it affords so many characteristic traits of its author, it is inserted for the information and entertainment of the reader in Appendix V.

love and esteem; and many instances are recorded of her piety and beneficence. She had accompanied her husband through all the vicissitudes of his fortunes; and an affectionate union of forty-three years rendered the loss of her the severest
1589. calamity of his life. The despondency caused to him by this irreparable calamity, produced a desire to renounce public business, so irksome in that state of his feelings, and to devote the remainder of his life to retirement and meditation. But Elizabeth was too sensible of the vast importance of his counsels. She peremptorily rejected the resignation which he tendered, yet softened her refusal with those arts which she knew so well to employ.

Unhappiness of his latter years.

But though Burleigh continued to apply himself with undiminished vigour to public business, his happiness had sustained a loss which nothing could repair. In his wife he had been deprived of a companion whose society long habit had rendered essential to his enjoyment; while the increasing severity of the gout, with other infirmities of age, aggravated the distress of his mind by the pains of his body. By no trait had he hitherto been more remarkable, than by the unruffled calmness of his temper. The serenity of his countenance seemed to indicate a tranquillity so confirmed, as to be incapable of interruption; and an eye-witness informs us that, for thirty years together, he was

seldom seen moved with joy in prosperity, or with sorrow in adversity. * But in the latter years of his life, this consummate self-command began to forsake him. Business became more irksome as strength decreased, and the success with which his antagonists thwarted his pacific counsels gave him infinite pain, as they seemed likly to undo all the national advantages which it had been the labour of his life to procure. His temper now became so unfortunately altered, that he, who had been so eminent for coolness, sometimes gave way to passion, in opposition to every dictate of discretion. † In a conversation with M. Fouquerolles, an envoy from Henry the Fourth, something which occurred so transported him with passion, that he broke out into the most vehement invectives against that monarch. ‡ His intercourse with his servants, which had been uniformly placid and cheerful, was now frequently interrupted by sudden bursts of peevishness: but on such occasions, he immediately recollected himself; appeared sensible of the injustice of injuring those who could not retaliate; and endeavoured, by assuming a peculiar complacency in his words and looks, or by studiously devising some acts of kindness, to make re-

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 43.

† Birch's Memoirs, Vol. I. p. 165. ‡ Ibid. Vol. II. p. 328.

paration for the pain which he had unadvisedly caused.*

Decay. Various indications of declining health now began to assail the aged statesman. Still he continued assiduous at his post, and laboured to rescue his countrymen from those delusive hopes of military glory and plunder, in pursuit of which they threatened to exhaust all their solid resources. The last public measure which he accomplished was the conclusion of an advantageous treaty with Holland: and he closed his long and useful labours in the council with an earnest but ineffectual effort to persuade them to negociate with Death. Spain. He died on the 4th of August 1598, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, having held the station of prime-minister of England for the long period of forty years, and assisted in the conduct of public affairs for upwards of half a century. His death-bed was surrounded by friends whom he esteemed, by children for whose future welfare he had provided, by servants devoted to him from a long interchange of good offices; and he expired with the utmost serenity and composure.†

The death of Burleigh was a cause of general sorrow. Elizabeth deeply lamented the loss of a minister in whose exertions she had found securi-

* Life of William Lord Burghley, p. 49.

† Ibid. p. 63.

ty and success during her whole reign: and the clouds which overhung the close of her career must often have renewed her regret for the want of her wise and faithful counsellor. A minister who opposes the multitude in the pursuit of an object on which their heated imaginations have fixed, is sure, at the moment, to be exposed to reproach. Such was the situation of Burleigh at the period of his death. In the face of popular clamour, he continued to deprecate a war, which was no longer necessary for the public safety, and which wasted the wealth of the nation to gratify the pride or avarice of individuals. The Earl of Essex, who still stood at the head of his antagonists, was the idol of the people; and they fondly contrasted the high spirit, the love of glory, the courageous sentiments of this young nobleman, with what they termed the cold, cautious, illiberal policy of the aged Burleigh. Yet his death caused more regret than satisfaction, even among the unthinking multitude. They felt themselves deprived of a guardian, under whose vigilant protection they had long reposed and prospered; and there remained no statesman of equal experience to guide their affairs, at a time when the decay of Elizabeth, and a disputed succession, threatened the nation with many calamities. The lapse of time has long since removed those circumstances which elevated the

hopes and inflamed the passions of his contemporaries; the merits of Burleigh have been more justly estimated; and posterity seems to concur in recognizing him as the wisest minister of England.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX I.

THE UTOPIA.

The substance of the fable is as follows. More, having, on a particular occasion, visited the Low Countries, happened to pass some tine at Antwerp, where he enjoyed the company of his friend Petrus Ægidius, a man equally distinguished for the urbanity of his manners and the depth of his erudition. Ægidius, desirous to provide a rich banquet for the curiosity of his friend, introduced to him, at a fit opportunity, a person whose appearance was rendered remarkable by the length of his beard, his dusky and weather-beaten countenance, and the careless manner in which his cloak hung from his shoulder. This stranger was discovered to be no other than the celebrated traveller Raphael Hythlodæus, who had accompanied Americus Vesputius in all his voyages to the new world; and, at his own earnest request, had been permitted to make one of the twenty-four, whom, at the conclusion of his fourth voyage, Americus there left behind him. More, inexpressibly delighted with his new acquaintance, listened with eager attention, while he recounted the adventures of himself and five of his companions, who had quitted the country where they had been left by Americus, and traversed still more distant and unknown regions. At

first, while their journey lay within the tropics, they found themselves surrounded by vast and dreary deserts, where vegetation had almost lost its power, from the excessive heat of the sun; where the only inhabitants were wild beasts and serpents, or men scarcely less fierce or less dangerous. But as they proceeded farther in their journey, nature gradually began to assume a milder aspect: the heat became less intense, the earth was covered with a fresher green, the animals seemed more harmless and gentle; till at length the appearance of cultivated fields, of villages, cities, ships busily employed in commerce, proved that they were now arrived among nations, who approached in civilization to those of Europe. The account of the manners and customs of these nations, so unexpectedly found in a state of high improvement, afforded peculiar gratification to More; and the institutions of one people in particular, the Utopians, so forcibly attracted his admiration, that the desire of imparting some account of them to the public could not be resisted.

Such is the introduction to the history of the Utopians: next follows a more particular description of this remarkable people. More, struck with the wonderful sagacity of the stranger, and his profound acquaintance with men and manners, could not help expressing his regret, that acquirements so rare and so well calculated to benefit mankind, should not be displayed at the court of some great prince, and applied to promote the welfare of nations. Hythlodæus argues the point with his new acquaintance; and shows him the folly of expecting that a man, at once very wise and very honest, should acquire any sway in the councils of a monarch, surrounded, as he usually is, by sycophants who, for their own private ends, always give the advice which humours his ruling passion, however pernicious to himself, or destructive to his people. In the course of this discussion, the abject servility of courtiers, the bad education of princes, the absurd

and ruinous ideas of unlimited prerogative instilled into their minds by interested flattery, are placed in a striking point of view, and undergo a severe and merited chastisement. While the doctrines, that a prince cannot be guilty of injustice, that all the possessions, and even all the persons of his subjects are his, and that they are entitled only to what is left them by his good pleasure, are represented by Hythlodæus, as the base adulation of parasites, and a full apology for every crime: we find him advancing, as the dictates of wisdom and honesty, that princes are appointed solely for the benefit of the people, for the better regulation of their affairs, and their more complete protection from injuries; that monarchs ought, to look on themselves as shepherds, entrusted with the care of a flock, for whose wants and security it is their first and sovereign duty to provide. Surprising doctrines! when we consider the age in which they were uttered, and the tenets which prevailed a century afterwards.

Nor is it against princes and their minions alone that this free satire is pointed. In England, (for Hythlodæus had also visited England,) the traveller takes occasion to notice "the crowd of nobles, who waste their existence in idleness, feeding like drones on the labour of others, and (with an avarice no less mean than their prodigality is unbounded) fleecing their wretched tenants to procure the means of profligate dissipation. As if such things were not sufficiently pernicious, continued he, these personages carry about with them an immense multitude of idle attendants, who, having never learnt any honest means of earning a livelihood, must, when no longer useful for show, increase the burdens of the nation, by adding to its beggars." The monks and priests also, in their turn, pass the ordeal of his satire, and sustain the severe raillery repeatedly directed against their hypocrisy, their licentiousness, and their avarice.

But the ridicule of Hythlodæus is not confined to particu-

lar classes; he frequently exposes the absurdity of opinions then generally held in reverence, and discloses the defects of institutions, which, from the indolence, rather than the conviction of succeeding generations, remain to this day unaltered. He attacks, by convincing arguments, the severity of the English criminal code; and more particularly the absurdity, as well as the iniquity, of those laws, which affix a capital punishment to the most trivial thefts. "Nothing," he observes, "can be more pernicious, than to blend together crimes of the most unequal magnitude, and confound the guilt of the thief with that of the murderer, by sentencing both to the same punishment. When the highwayman perceives that the same fate awaits him, if convicted of robbery, as if he had also added murder to his guilt, he has here a powerful incitement to provide more effectually for his own safety, by destroying the witness of his crime."

But the principal scope of all these examples and reasonings is to show how vain it is to oppose arguments to prejudice; how difficult to wean mankind from a blind reverence for the most pernicious institutions, when sanctioned by time, and rendered familiar by habit. To those, in particular, who are placed in the most exalted stations, and entrusted with the management of public affairs, it is observed, that every proposal of improvment is peculiarly ungracious. It seems an insult on their sagacity, that others should presume to discover what had escaped themselves; and to maintain the pretensions of their own vanity, appears an object of infinitely greater importance than to produce essential advantages to their country. "Among the counsellors of a prince," says Hythlodæus, "there is no one who is not either in reality, or at least in his own opinion, so knowing as to have no need of advice from others. Yet, in cherishing their own darling opinions, these men only act a very natural part; the crow is pleased with her own brood, and the ape

delighted with her chattering progeny. But if any man is so idle as to propose, to persons thus wrapped up in their own conceit, some improvement which he has drawn from the examples presented by history, or from his observations on the practice of foreign countries, their vanity at once takes the alarm. They imagine that their own reputation for wisdom is in the utmost danger, and can be preserved only by discovering that the proposed improvement is futile or impracticable. If no other reason occurs for rejecting it, they fly to their never-failing resource, "that the existing institutions satisfied their forefathers, and it were good for the present generation to be as wise as them; and, having uttered this amirable maxim, it is amazing with what self-complacence they look down on their importunate adviser."

During his stay in England, Hythlodæus had an opportunity of experiencing both the facility with which mankind acquiesce in their existing institutions, however evidently pernicious, and the carelessness with which they reject the most palpable improvements. In a company of learned and grave persons, where he happened to be present, a lawyer contrived to thrust into the conversation a long panegyric on the laws of England, and more especially on that rigid justice that was exercised against thieves; he could not, however, help at the same time expressing his surprise, that although twenty were frequently suspended together on the same gibbet, and so very few suffered to escape, yet neither the numbers nor audacity of the depredators seemed anywise diminished. Hythlodæus, in reply, maintained that, if there are multitudes who cannot otherwise procure the necessaries of life, it is vain to expect the suppression of theft and robbery from the severest punishments; he recounted various private customs and public institutions, by which numbers of the English common people were gradually led to this unhappy fate: he showed, besides, that excessive pu-

nishments are both unjust and impolitic, that they tend to confound, in the ideas of men, great crimes with small, and to render them as little scrupulous of committing the one as the other. Having, by these and many other arguments, demonstrated the impolicy of affixing such cruel punishments to dishonesty, he described the institutions which he had observed in a certain country of Persia, where the laws dealt with this crime in a very mild manner, and yet proved remarkably efficacious for its prevention. "And why," added he, "might not such institutions be substituted in England, for those which experience has proved to be inadequate to their object?"—"No," replied the lawyer, "such institutions can never be adopted in this kingdom, without bringing the state into the most imminent danger;"—and, having thus unanswerably refuted his antagonist, he shook his head, drew up his lip, and enjoyed his triumph in silence. The whole company acknowledged the irresistible force of his argument, and declared themselves of his opinion.

In this manner does More proceed, throughout his first book, exposing the vices of political institutions, ridiculing the pertinacious prejudices of the people, and thus preparing the way for the reception of his own projected improvements. Hythlodæus afterwards relates to his impatient hearers the institutions of the wonderful islanders.

The fundamental principle of the Utopian constitution is the community of goods. The island is divided into a number of cities, to each of which a district of the adjacent country is assigned. The inhabitants of each division share every thing in common, their labour as well as the fruits of their labour. While the magistrates, as a special part of their duty, take care that every citizen, both male and female, shall perform a certain portion of work, a plentiful supply of all necessaries is produced with very moderate exertion; and as no one is allowed to remain idle, so no one is depressed or

exhausted by excessive toil. As the cultivation of the fields, the building and repairing of houses, the food and clothing of the people, are all regulated and directed by the magistrate, under his vigilant superintendence, all useless waste of labour, all the bad effects of private negligence and luxury, are avoided.

Such are the principles on which the legislator of Utopia erects a political system, which, however beautiful, must be feeble and unsteady, since placed on so vain a foundation. Had he studied the laws of human nature, instead of pursuing the devious tract of his fancy, (a tract which, unfortunately, succeeding political speculators have, for the most part, preferred,) he would have discovered that every individual, being most intimately acquainted with his own feelings and wants, and most urgently stimulated by his own desires, is every way best qualified to undertake the care of his own enjoyments. He would have found, that nothing can be more hopeless than the attempt to reduce to uniformity the feelings and desires of a whole society; and nothing more oppressive, than to be perpetually thwarted or goaded by even the most wise and virtuous magistrate. He would, in short, have been convinced, that while every individual, stimulated by necessity, by ambition, by affection, pursues, without any restraint but what the safety of others requires, those plans to which he is led by his own private views;—the opulence, the comfort, the knowledge, the general prosperity of the whole community, will attain the greatest perfection to which man, in his present state, can presume to aspire.

To maintain a complete community of goods, and to destroy every idea of private property, the Utopians are obliged to have recourse to many remarkable institutions. Like the Lacedæmonians, they eat their meals in public, and, with a refinement which escaped Lycurgus, they, every ten years,

exchange their houses by lot. Nor is it found a less difficult task to prevent the indolent from avoiding their just share of the common labour. As the cultivation of the fields, their principal and most toilsome occupation, does not require the exertions of all, a certain number is, every two years, sent from the cities to carry on the agriculture, and at the end of that period, is regularly replaced by another equal portion. Public superintendents take care that every person shall employ a prescribed part of each day in some useful occupation; and when any one obtains a licence to travel from one city to another, he can procure neither food nor lodging, until he has executed the daily task in the place where he sojourns. As the use of money would be superfluous, where all are equally entitled to share in the public produce, and where a certain portion of labour is the universal price, it is there entirely unknown. Nor are the precious metals debarred only from circulating in the form of coin; to render them an object of general contempt and aversion, they are applied to the meanest and most degrading uses, as ornaments for slaves, and chains for malefactors.

In the present age, when the nature of wealth and the use of money are more distinctly understood, we cannot but smile at the self-complacence of the legislator, while, triumphing in the excellence of this regulation, he imagines that he has thus torn up avarice by the roots, and along with it a long catalogue of the blackest crimes, as if substitutes could not be found for gold, or the objects of inordinate avarice were confined to the precious metals. But, notwithstanding these, and various other defects, which tarnish the institutions of the Utopians, the book is interesting, as many of the regulations present a very pleasing, though not practicable endeavour at perfection. The people of each city, divided into a certain number of families or households, elect the magistrates, who, in their turn, nominate their

prince, or president, from among four candidates selected by the people. This chief magistrate is appointed for life; the rest hold office by annual election. The affairs of state are transacted by the senate, unless on occasions of peculiar difficulty, when they are referred to the general council of the island. Every precaution is taken to prevent abuses on the part of the magistrates, yet the most complete submission is paid to their decisions, and any resistance to the laws would immediately be followed by the severest punishment.

In their religious, as well as their civil institutions, the same guarded respect is paid to the general feelings. As it is impossible that the opinions of a whole people, in regard to the abstruse and intricate questions of theology, should be reduced to an exact uniformity, every allowance is made for that difference in religious tenets which must naturally take place. While every one is allowed to believe, without inquiry or molestation, whatever is approved by his own understanding, he is not only prevented from employing either insult or injury toward those of an opposite creed, but even from attempting, by any other means than the most gentle persuasion, to make proselytes. Utopia abounds in sectaries, who openly profess the most opposite tenets; yet a national worship has been devised, in which even the most bigoted never refuse to join. Although some might introduce images into their rites, and some pay adoration to the spirits of departed saints, or to a plurality of gods, while others looked on these practices as the dictates of abject superstition, yet, as they all with one voice acknowledged the existence of one Supreme Being, the Lord of lords, and Sovereign Director of all things, a point was afforded, in which the general worship might, without violence, centre. While every one is permitted, in private, to exercise, without restraint, the rites most conformable to his own belief, all adoration in the public temples is offered up to that one Supreme

Being, whose attributes all equally acknowledge, and whose protection all equally desire.

The sagacity of the Utopians cannot be sufficiently applauded, for connecting together so intimately the ideas of virtue and industry, of idleness and vice. And, although the regulations adopted by their legislator, to retain all his people in continual activity, are often fanciful, and perhaps impracticable, yet it must be acknowledged, that the object he had in view is essentially connected with the improvement and happiness of mankind. The vast advantages which have resulted to the reformed countries of modern Europe, from the dispersion of those hives of idle ecclesiastics who swarmed in the convents and cathedrals, demonstrate the wisdom of the Utopians, in having but a very small number of priests, yet all distinguished for their learning, and venerated for their virtue. They justly supposed, that the number of persons who could be found thus qualified, even in a whole nation, was very limited. It had also never entered into the minds of these islanders to set apart a class of hereditary nobles, who should succeed, without any exertion on their part, to the reward due only to public services; who (like many of the English nobility in the days of More) should, with their numerous retainers, form such a lamentable addition to the idleness and profligacy of the community. Their only nobility is the class of the learned, consisting of persons selected from among the people at large, for the apparent superiority of their talents and acquirements, and permitted to devote their time to the cultivation of their minds, in the conviction that they may thus contribute more effectually to the public advantage, than by directing their activity to servile labour. From among this class, which comprehends the most distinguished talents, and the most valuable accomplishments of the community,

the magistrates and ambassadors, the prince and priests, are selected.

In nothing are the Utopians more strikingly superior to other nations, than in the extreme readiness and candour with which they give a full consideration to every improvement, whether devised by one of themselves, or imported from foreign countries. Having, from the imperfect suggestions of Hythlodæus and his companions, collected some rude idea of the nature and utility of printing, this useful art was immediately carried into practice, with a success equal to their ardour. The reception which they gave to the Christian religion, even from these rude missionaries, was conformable to their accustomed candour; and a fair comparison of its tenets, with the religious opinions hitherto known among them, was sufficient, with the better informed, for their conversion.

Contented with their own happy island, and convinced that an extension of territory would, in fact, produce weakness, with an appearance of greater strength, like those luxurious repasts which inflate the muscles, while they undermine the health, the Utopians carry on no wars of conquest. To repel the aggressions of an enemy, to relieve some unfortunate neighbour from external violence, or domestic oppression, are, with them, the only causes of war. The triumphs of victory form, in their eyes, a poor compensation for the destruction and misery by which they must ever be purchased, and nothing appears to them so unworthy of its name as military glory. Yet, while thus attached to peace, they well know that it can be maintained only by being ever prepared for war. Military exercises, therefore, form a necessary part of education with the young, and are not neglected even by those of more mature years. Military stores being in constant readiness, their army, on the first alarm, is prepared to carry the war beyond the bounds of

their own territories. The ideas which they entertain of the relations of peace are no less singular. As they never, without due provocation, commence a war, so they never enter into a treaty of peace. A solemn engagement between two nations, not to commit mutual violence, appears to them no less unnecessary, and unworthy of human nature, than a formal compact between two neighbours not to rob or assassinate each other. To live in peace and harmony is so evidently the interest of nations as of individuals, that they consider it our natural bent; and conclude, with an opinion abundantly justified by experience, that the evil passions which would counteract these intentions of nature, will not be restrained by the forms of a treaty.

The other works of More, besides his fragment of a History of England, are almost all religious, and chiefly controversial. He has, indeed, left a considerable number of Latin epigrams, partly translated from the Greek, and partly original; but they are not in general written with that point and elegance which we might have expected from such a wit and scholar. They appear the careless effusions of the moment, and probably of his younger years.

His other writings in Latin were,

1. A Reply to Luther's Answer to Henry VIII. This performance, very witty, but equally scurrilous, he did not chuse to give to the world under his own name, but adopted the fictitious one of *Gulielmus Rosicus.*

2. A Reply to an Epistle of Joannes Pomeranus, a follower of Luther.

3. A Treatise on the Passion of Christ, which he wrote in the Tower. It was afterwards translated into English by his niece, Mrs Basset.

His English writings were,

1. His Dialogues, which were chiefly intended to expose the errors in Tindal's translation of the Bible.

2. Answers to Tindal, Barnes, &c. &c.

3. The Supplication of Souls, in answer to the Supplication of Beggars.

4. Answer to Salem and Bizanze.

5. Three books, concerning Comfort and Tribulation: A Treatise on the Sacrament: A Treatise on the Passion. These were all written in the Tower.

Many of his letters, the most valuable part of his works, are preserved; and many are to be found scattered in collections of the letters of Erasmus.

APPENDIX II.

The following Letter, concerning the Education of his Family, More wrote to Mr Gunnel, their domestic Tutor.

"I HAVE received your letters, my dear Gunnel, such as I have always found them, most elegant and full of affection. Your regard to my children I perceive from your letters, your diligence from theirs; every one of the last filled me with increased satisfaction. But what gave me most unfeigned pleasure was, to learn that Elizabeth had maintained, in her mother's absence, that modest and respectful behaviour, which few do when their mothers are present. Tell her that this conduct is more gratifying to me than the possession of all the learning in the world. For as I prefer learning, united with virtue, to all the treasures of princes, so I look on the reputation of learning, when separated from good morals, as merely infamy rendered notorious and conspicuous. This more especially is the case in regard to women, whose knowledge, as a novelty, and a reproach on the indolence of men, the world is eager to attack, and to lay on letters the vices of their disposition; imagining that from the faults of the more learned, their own ignorance will pass for virtue. But if, on the other hand, any woman should unite even a moderate portion of learning to eminent mental virtues, (which, under your direction, I trust all my girls

will do,) I reckon her to have made a greater acquisition of real good, than if she had joined the riches of Crœsus with the beauty of Helen. Not on account of the reputation which will thus be gained, (though that also will accompany virtue, as the shadow does the body,) but because the solid rewards of wisdom can neither be taken away like riches, nor decay like beauty. It depends upon the rectitude of one's own conscience, and not on the breath of others, the most precarious and dangerous of supports. For as it is a characteristic of a good man to avoid infamy, so to seek only for fame is not only an indication of vanity, but subjects a man to ridicule and wretchedness. He must have a troubled soul, indeed, who is elevated with joy, or depressed with grief, according as the opinion of mankind happens to fluctuate. There is no greater benefit, in my opinion, derived from learning, than that inestimable lesson which it teaches, to regard, in the pursuit of literature, not its applause but its utility. Although some pretenders have abused learning, as well as other good things, as merely the means of acquiring applause, yet the most learned men, those philosophers who have pointed out the wisest rules of human life, have ever taught more salutary precepts.

"I have dwelt at greater length on the impropriety of directing the mind to applause, because, my dear Gunnel, you have, in your letter, declared it as your opinion, that the lofty and aspiring genius of my Margaret ought not to be curbed. In this judgment I entirely agree; and I trust you will also allow, with me, that a habit of fixing the mind on vain and meaner ends, depresses and degrades a generous and noble disposition; while, on the other hand, that mind is exalted which aspires to virtue and to real good, neglecting those shadows which men usually mistake for solid benefits. It is from a conviction of these truths, my dear Gunnel, that I have entreated not only you, who I knew would

voluntarily second my aims, from your tender regard to all my children; that I have not only entreated my wife, whose maternal tenderness sufficiently impels her to the most earnest endeavours; but that I have also entreated all my friends to take every opportunity of warning my children to avoid the precipices of pride and vanity, and walk in the smooth and level paths of modesty; to look without emotion on the glare of gold; and not to sigh for those things which they falsely admired in another. I have entreated my friends to admonish them that they should not value themselves more, when possessed of beauty; nor less, when deprived of it: that they should not, through negligence, deface the comeliness which nature may have given them, nor endeavour to increase it by improper arts: that they should account virtue the first good, and learning the second: that from learning they ought to derive its most sublime lessons, piety towards God, benevolence towards all men, modesty of the heart, and Christian humility. By such a conduct it is, that they will secure to themselves, from God, the rewards of an innocent life; in the certain expectation of which, they will not be afraid of death; and being possessed of a solid source of pleasure, will neither be buoyed up with empty applauses, nor cast down by unjust reproaches. These I look on as the true and genuine fruits of learning; and, as I acknowledge that all the learned do not obtain them, so I maintain that those who begin to study with this intention, may easily obtain this happy issue.

"Nor do I think that it affects the harvest, that a man or woman has sown the seed. If they are worthy of being ranked with the human race, if they are distinguished by reason from the beasts; that learning, by which the reason is cultivated, is equally suitable to both. Both of them, if the seed of good principles be sown in them, equally produce the germs of virtue. But if the female soil be in its

nature stubborn, and more productive of weeds than fruit, (an opinion which has often been employed to deter women from literature;) it ought, in my opinion, to be the more diligently cultivated with learning and good instruction, to correct by industry the defects of nature. These were the opinions of the most wise and virtuous men of antiquity. To omit others, I shall only mention the venerated names of Jerome and Augustine, who not only exhorted the most illustrious matrons and the most admired virgins to apply themselves to learning, but also assisted their progress, by diligently explaining to them the most abstruse parts of the scripture; and wrote to young women letters so full of erudition, as to be barely intelligible to many men who profess themselves extremely erudite. My dear Gunnel, make my daughters acquainted with the works of these excellent men; and from hence they will learn what end they ought to propose from their learning; and how wholly they ought to look for its fruits in a good conscience, and the approval of heaven. Thus, internally happy and tranquil, they will neither be moved by the praise of flatterers, nor chagrined by the ignorant scoffers at learning.

"But I hear you reply, that although all these maxims may be true, yet they are beyond the capacity of my young scholars; since few, indeed, of a more advanced age, can wholly resist the ticklings of vanity. But, my Gunnel, the more difficult it is to get rid of this distemper of pride, the greater ought our correcting efforts to be from the earliest stages of life. Nor can I attribute the extreme obstinacy with which this vice adheres to our breasts, to any other cause than that, almost from the time we are born, it is implanted by nurses, in the tender minds of children, cherished by teachers, fostered and matured by parents; while every one instructs the pupil to expect praise as the proper reward of every good action. Thus being long accustomed to

look with high estimation on applause, it happens, at length, that while they endeavour to gain the approbation of the greater number, who are always the worst, they become ashamed to be good. To keep off this contagion from my children, let me entreat you, and their mother, and all my friends, continually to expose the folly and despicable nature of vanity: and, on the other hand, to represent that nothing is more noble than that humble modesty so often inculcated by Christ. This lesson ought to be impressed on their minds rather by teaching them virtue, than reproaching them with their faults, and thus inducing them to love and not hate those who give them wholesome counsel. It might be extremely useful, for that purpose, to put into their hands the precepts of some ancient Fathers on this subject; they are monitors who cannot be suspected of passion, and who must derive much authority from their sacred character. If their lessons in Sallust do not occupy their whole time, you will add to the many other obligations I owe you, by reading something of this sort with my Margaret and Elizabeth; for John and Cecil are not, perhaps, far enough advanced. By this means you will render my children, who are dear to me by nature, and dearer by learning and virtue, still more dear by an increase of knowledge and good morals."

The following Letters were written by More to his Children, while he was absent from them at Court.

"Thomas More to his whole School.

"You see what a device I have found to save paper, and avoid the labour of writing all your names. But, although you are all so dear to me, that if I had named one, I must have named all the rest, yet there is no appellation under which you appear dearer to me than that of scholar. The tie of learning seems almost to bind me to

you more powerfully than even the tie of nature. I am glad, therefore, that Mr Drue is again safely returned to you, as you know I had some reason to be anxious about him. If I did not love you so much, I should envy you the happiness of possessing so many and such excellent masters. I understand Mr Nicholas is also with you; and that you are, with his assistance, making such prodigious progress in astronomy, as not only to know the pole-star, and the dog, and such other common constellations; but even, with a skill that bespeaks truly accomplished astronomers, to be able to distinguish the sun from the moon. Go on then, with this new and wonderful science, by which you ascend to the stars. And, while you diligently consider them with your eyes, let this holy season of Lent remind you of the sacred hymn of Boethius, which teaches you to raise your minds also to heaven, lest, while your eyes are lifted up to the skies, your souls should grovel among the brutes. Adieu, my dearest children."

"Thomas More to his dear Children, and to Margaret Giggs, whom he numbers among his Children.

"THE merchant of Bristol brought me your letters the day after he received them from you. I need not say that I was exceedingly delighted, for nothing can come from your hands, so rude and negligent, as would not give me more satisfaction than the most laboured production from any other person. So much does my affection endear your writings to me; but, happily, they need nothing to render them agreeable beyond their own intrinsic merit, their pleasantry and elegant Latin. There was not one of your letters which did not charm me. But, to speak sincerely, John's letter pleased me most, because it was longer than the others, and because he appeared to have written it

with more study and pains. For he has not only prettily described, and neatly expressed whatever he says, but with much pleasantry, and not a little shrewdness, retorts my jests; yet so temperately, as well as agreeably, does he manage his repartees, that he shows that he never forgets it is his father to whom he writes; and whom he fears to offend, while he studies to amuse him. Now I expect a letter from each of you almost every day that I am absent. Neither will I have any such excuse, as the shortness of time, the hasty departure of the messenger, the want of any thing to say; excuses which John never makes. For nobody prevents you from writing; and, as to the messenger, may not you be beforehand with him, by having your letters always written and sealed, to wait any opportunity? But, as to the want of matter, how can that ever take place when you write to me?—To me, who am gratified to hear either of your studies or amusements: who shall be pleased to hear you, at great length, inform me that you have nothing at all to say; which certainly must be a very easy task, especially for women, who are said to be always most fluent upon nothing. This, however, let me impress upon your remembrance; that, whether you write of serious subjects, or of the merest trifles, you always write with care and attention. Nor will it be amiss, if you should first write all your letters in English, which you will afterwards translate much more successfully, and with much less fatigue, into Latin, while the mind is free from the labour of invention, and solely occupied with the expression. But, while I leave this to your own judgments, I enjoin you by all means to examine what you write with great care, before you make out a fair copy. Consider the sentences first in the order in which they are placed, and then attend minutely to their several parts. By this means you will easily discover any improper expression, into which you may have fallen; and even after you have corrected it,

and written out a fair copy, do not account it irksome still to examine it again. For, in copying over, we are apt to fall into errors which we had already noticed and corrected. By this diligence, your trifles will, in a short time, be of importance. For as there is nothing so witty and pointed as that it may not be rendered insipid by a stupid and awkward mode of expression, so there is nothing so silly in itself, as that it may not, by skilful management, acquire a pleasant and graceful turn."

"Thomas More to Margaret, Elizabeth, Cecilia, his beloved daughters, and to Margaret Giggs, whom he loves not less than if she were his daughter by birth.

"I CANNOT express, my sweet girls, the exquisite pleasure which I received from your elegant letters. Nor am I less gratified to find, that though you are upon a tour, and frequently changing your residence, you omit none of your accustomed daily exercises. Now, indeed, I believe you love me, since you do in my absence what you know would give me the greatest pleasure if I were present. And as I see you do every thing to gratify me, it shall be my part to make your attentions profitable to yourselves. Believe me, there is nothing which more refreshes me, amidst the fatigues of business, than when I read what has been written by you. Were it not for the evidence before me, I might have suspected that your teacher was led astray by his affections, in the flattering accounts which he gave me of your proficiency. But from what you write, you induce me to believe him, though his praises of your elegance and acuteness in disputation might otherwise well exceed my faith. Therefore, I am most anxious to return home to you, that I may compare my scholar with you. He cannot believe that he will not find some exaggeration in your master's accounts. But for

my part, as I know how indefatigable you are, I have no doubt, that if you do not overcome your master himself in disputation, you will at least not give up the point. Adieu, my dearest girls."

A Letter of More to his Daughter Margaret.

"You are too timid and bashful, my dear Margaret, in asking money from a father who is desirous to give it, especially when you made me happy with a letter, every line of which I would not recompense with a piece of gold, as Alexander did those of Cherilus; but, if my power were equal to my will, I would repay every syllable with an ounce of gold. I have sent you what you asked, and would have added more, were it not so delightful to receive the requests and caresses of a daughter—of you, in particular, whom both knowledge and virtue make most dear to my soul. The sooner you spend this money, in your usual proper way, and the sooner you have recourse to me for more, the greater pleasure you will give to your father. Adieu, my beloved daughter."

APPENDIX III.

Epitaph on the Tomb of Sir Thomas More, in the Church of Chelsea.

(Written by himself.)

THOMAS MORUS, urbe Londinensi, familiâ non celebri sed honestâ natus, in literis utcunque versatus; quum et causas aliquot annos juvenis egisset in foro, et in urbe suâ pro Shirevo jus dixisset; ab invictissimo rege Henrico Octavo (cui uni regum omnium gloria prius contigit, ut Fidei Defensor, qualem et gladio et calamo vere præstitit, merito vocaretur) adscitus in aulam est, delectusque in consilium; et creatus eques, Proquæstor primum, post Cancellarius Lancastriæ, tandem Angliæ, miro principis favore factus est. Sed interim in publico regni senatu, lectus est orator populi: præterea legatus regis nonnunquam fuit, alias alibi, postremo vero Cameraci comes et collega junctus principi legationis Cuthberto Tunstallo tum Londinensi, mox Dunelmensi Episcopo, quo viro vix habet orbis hodie quicquam eruditius, prudentius, melius. Ibi, inter summos orbis Christiani monarchas, rursus refecta fœdera redditamque mundo diu desideratam pacem et lætissimus vidit et legatus interfuit.

Quam superi pacem firment faxintque perennem!

In hoc officiorum vel honorum cursu, quum ita versaretur ut neque princeps optimus operam ejus improbaret, neque

nobilibus esset invisus, nec injucundus populo, furibus autem, et homicidis . . . . * molestus. Pater ejus tandem Johannes Morus, eques, et in eum judicum ordinem cooptatus, qui regius concessus vocatur; homo civilis, suavis, innocens, mitis, misericors, æquus et integer; annis quidem gravis, sed corpore plus quam pro ætate viridi, postquam eo productam sibi vitam vidit ut filium viderit Angliæ Cancellarium, satis in terra se jam moratum ratus, libens emigravit in Cœlum. At filius, defuncto patre, cui quamdiu supererat comparatus, et juvenis vocari consueverat, et ipse quoque sibi videbatur, amissum jam patrem requirens, ac editos ex se liberos quatuor et nepotes undecim respiciens, apud animum suum cœpit persenescere. Auxit hunc affectum animi subsecuta statim, velut adpetentis senii signum, pectoris valetudo deterior. Itaque, mortalium harum rerum satur, quam rem, a puero pene, semper optaverat, ut ultimos aliquot annos obtineret liberos, quibus hujus vitæ negotiis paulatim se seducens, futuræ possit immortalitatem meditari, eam rem tandem (si cœptis annuat Deus) indulgentissimi principis incomparabili beneficio, resignatis honoribus, impetravit: atque hoc sepulchrum sibi, quod mortis eum nunquam cessantis obrepere quotidie commonefaceret, translatis huc prioris uxoris ossibus, extruendum curavit. Quod

* This blank, it is conjectured, was filled up, or intended to be filled up, with the words *hereticisque*, since More informs Erasmus that he boasted in his epitaph of his enmity to heretics. As the blank, however, is perfectly plain, and no symptom of erasure appears on the marble, it may be supposed that More, from farther reflection, rather chose to leave a space vacant for the word, than actually to inscribe it. Another explanation has been given.—We are informed, that, in the seventeenth century, the epitaph was scarcely legible, whereas at present it is perfectly distinct. Hence it is conjectured, that the whole has been repaired, probably by some descendant of More, and that, from respect to the memory of the illustrious author, no attempt has been made to retouch this obnoxious word. The perfect smoothness of the marble seems, however, to favour the former supposition.

ne superstes sibi frustra fecerit, neve ingruentem trepidus mortem horreat, sed desiderio Christi libens oppetat; mortemque ut sibi non omnino mortem sed januam vitæ feliciori inveniat; precibus eum piis, lector optime, spirantem precor, defunctumque prosequere.

Chara Thomæ jacet hic Joanna uxorcula Mori,
Qui tumulum Aliciæ hunc destino, quique mihi.
Una mihi dedit hoc conjuncta virentibus annis,
Me vocet ut puer, et trina puella patrem.
Altera privignis, quod gloria rara novercæ est,
Tam pia quam natis vix fuit ulla suis.
Altera sic mecum vixit, sic altera vivit,
Charior incertum est quæ sit an illa fuit.
O simul, O juncti poteramus vivere nos tres
Quam bene, si fatum, religioque sinant!
At societ tumulus, societ nos obsecro cœlum,
Sic mors, non potuit quod dare vita, dabit.

APPENDIX IV.

The Earl of Sussex to Sir William Cecil. *

"Good Mr Secretary,

"UPON your request and promise, made in your letter of the 16th, I will write to you what by any means I conceive in this great matter; although the greatness of the cause, in respect of the person whose it is, the inconstancy and subtleness of the people with whom we deal, and the little account made always of my simple judgment, give me good occasion of silence. And, therefore, (unless it be to the queen's majesty, from whom I would not wish any thought of my heart to be hidden,) I look for a performance of your promise.

"The matter must at length take end, either by finding the Scottish queen guilty of the crimes that are objected against her, or by some manner of composition, with a show of saving her honour. The first, I think, will hardly be attempted, for two causes. The one, for that if her adverse party accuse her of the murder, by producing of her letters, she will deny them, and accuse the most of them of manifest consent to the murder, hardly to be denied; so as, upon the trial on both sides, her proofs will judicially fall

* This letter was written a few months after Mary's confinement in England; and the writer was, at the time, employed as one of the Commissioners at York, to investigate the charges against her.

best out, it is thought. The other, for that their young king is of tender and weak years, and state of body; and, if God should call him, and their queen were judicially defaced and dishonoured, and her son, in respect of her wickedness, admitted to the crown, Hamilton, upon his death, should succeed; which, as Murray's faction utterly detest, so, after her public defamation, they dare not, to avoid Hamilton, receive her again, for fear of revenge. And, therefore, to avoid these great perils, they surely intend, so far as I can by any means discover, to labour a composition, wherein Lyddington was a dealer here, hath, by means, dealt with the Scottish queen, and will also, I think, deal there. And to that end I believe you shall shortly hear of Melvil there, who, I think, is the instrument between Murray, Lyddington, and their queen, to work this composition; whereunto I think surely both parties do incline, although diversely affected for private respects.

"The Earl of Murray and his faction work that their queen would now willingly surrender to her son, after the example of Navarre; and procure the confirming of the regency in Murray; and therewith admit Hamilton and his faction to place of council, according to their states; and to remain in England herself, with her dowry of France; whereunto, I think, they would add a portion out of Scotland. And if she would agree to this, I think they would not only forbear to touch her in honour, but also deliver to her all matters that they have to charge her, and denounce her clear by parliament, and therewith put her in hope, not only to receive her again to her royal estate if her son die, but also upon some proof of the forgetting of her displeasure, to procure in short time, that she may be restored in her son's life, and he to give place to her for life: and if she will not surrender, it is thought Murray will allow of her restitution, and abode in England, so as he may continue regent. The Ha-

miltons seek that the young king's authority should be disannulled; the hurts done on either side recompensed; and the queen restored to her crown, and to remain in Scotland. And yet, in respect of her misgovernment, they are contented that she should be governed by a council of the nobility of that realm, to be appointed here; in which council there should be no superior in authority or place appointed, but that every nobleman should hold his place according to his state; and that the queen's majesty should compose all differences, from time to time, amongst them. And to avoid all difference and peril, their queen should have certain houses of no force; and a portion to maintain her estate: and the castles of Edinburgh, Stirling, and Dunbar, and other principal forts of the realm, to be delivered into the hands of upright noblemen, that leaned to no faction, to be sworn to hold them in sort to be prescribed; and that the whole nobility of Scotland should swear amity, and should testify the same under their hands and seals: and that the queen's majesty should take assurance for performance; and have the bringing up of the young prince in England, by nobility of England or Scotland, at her appointment. And, so as this might take effect, I think they might easily be induced to consent their queen should also remain in England, and have her dowry out of France, and a portion out of Scotland, to maintain her state and her son's, in places to be appointed by the queen's majesty.

"Thus do you see how these two factions, for their private causes, toss between them, the crown and public affairs of Scotland, and how near they be to agree, if their private causes were not; and care neither for the mother, nor the child, (as I think, before God,) but to serve their own turns. Neither will Murray like of any order whereby he should not be regent styled; nor Hamilton of any order whereby he should not be as great, or greater, in government than Mur-

ray. So as the government is presently the matter, whatsoever they say was heretofore the cause; and, therefore, it will be good we forget not our part in this tragedy.

"The opinion for the title to the crown, after the death of their queen and her son, is diversely carried, as the parties be affected to these two factions. The Hamiltons affirm the Duke of Chatelherault to be the next heir by the laws. The other faction say, that the young king, by his coronation, and mother's surrender, is rightfully invested of the crown of Scotland; whereby his next heir in blood is, by the laws, next heir also to the crown; and thereby the duke avoided. The fear of this decree maketh Hamilton to withstand the king's title, for the surety of his own, and the regency of Murray, in respect of his claim to be governor, as next heir to the crown; for which causes it is likely Hamilton will hardly yield to the one or the other. And yet, James Macgill, an assured man to Morton, talks with me secretly of this matter; and, defending the right of the Earl of Lennox's son, as next heir, in blood, to the young king, confessed to me that he thought, because it came by the mother, it must return by the mother's side, which was Hamilton; but it would put many men on horseback before it were performed; whereby you may see what leadeth in Scotland. There is some secret envy between Lyddington and Macgill; and, as I think, if they agree not by the way, you shall find Lyddington wholly bent to composition, and Macgill, of himself, otherwise inclined. If the queen's majesty would assure their defence, you may deal with them as you see cause.

"Thus far of that I have gathered by them; wherein, if they do not alter, I am sure I do not err. And now, touching my opinion of the matter, (not by way of advice, but as imparting to you what I conceive,) I think surely no end can be made good for England, except the person of the

Scottish queen be detained, by one means or other, in England. Of the two ends before written, I think to be best in all respects for the queen's majesty, if Murray will produce such matter as that the queen's majesty may, by virtue of her superiority over Scotland, find judicially the Scottish queen guilty of the murder of her husband, and therewith detain her in England, at the charges of Scotland, and allow of the crowning of the young king, and regency of Murray. Whereunto, if Hamilton will submit himself, it were well done, for avoiding of his dependency upon France to receive him, with provision for indemnity of his title; and if he will not, then to assist Murray to prosecute him and his adherents by confiscation, &c. If this will not fall out sufficiently, (as I doubt it will not,) to determine judicially, if she deny her letters; then surely I think it best to proceed by composition, without show of any meaning to proceed to trial. And herein, as it shall be the surest way for the queen's majesty to procure the Scottish queen to surrender, &c. if that may be brought to pass; so, if she will by no means be induced to surrender, and will not end except she may be in some degree restored, then I think it fit to consider therein these matters following:

"First, To provide for her and her son, to remain in England, at the charges of Scotland.

"Secondly, To maintain in strength and authority Murray's faction, as much as may be, so as they oppress not unjustly Hamilton.

"Thirdly, To compose the causes between Murray and Hamilton, and their adherents, and to provide for Hamilton's indemnity in the matter of the title, to avoid his dependency upon France.

"Fourthly, That the queen's majesty order all differences that shall arise in Scotland; and to that end, have security on both sides.

"Fifthly, If Hamilton will wilfully dissent from order, it is better to assist Murray in the prosecuting of Hamilton by confiscation, although he flee therefore to France, than to put Murray any ways in peril of weakening.

"And lastly, To foresee that these Scots on both sides pack not together, so as to unwrap (under colour of this composition) their mistress out of all present slander, purge her openly, show themselves satisfied with her abode here, and, within short time after, either by reconcilement or the death of this child, join together to demand of the queen the delivery home of their queen to govern her own realm, she also making the like request; and then the queen, having no just cause to detain her, be bound in honour to restore her unto her realm, and for matters that in this time shall pass, have her a mortal enemy for ever after. And thus, ceasing to trouble you any farther, I wish to you as to myself.

"Yours, most assured,

"T. SUSSEX.

"*From York, the XXII. October*, 1568."

Secretary Cecil's Deliberation concerning Scotland, December 21, 1568.

THE best way for England, but not the easiest, that the Queen of Scots might remain deprived of her crown, and the state continue as it is.

The second way for England profitable, and not so hard.—That the Queen of Scots might be induced, by some persuasions, to agree that her son might continue king, because he is crowned, and herself to also remain queen; and that the government of the realm might be committed to such persons as the Queen of England should name, so as, for the nomination of them, it might be ordered that a convenient

number of persons of Scotland should be first named to the Queen of England, indifferently for the Queen of Scots, and for her son; that is to say, the one half by the Queen of Scots, and the other by the Earl of Lennox and Lady Lemon, parents to the child; and out of those, the queen's majesty of England to make choice for all the offices of the realm, that are, by the laws of Scotland, disposable by the king or queen of the land.

That until this may be done by the queen's majesty, the government remain in the hands of the Earl of Murray, as it is, providing he shall not dispose of any offices or perpetuals to continue any longer than to these offered of the premises.

That a parliament be summoned in Scotland by several commandments, both of the Queen of Scots and of the young king.

That hostages be delivered unto England, on the young king's behalf, to the number of twelve persons of the Earl of Murray's party, as the Queen of Scots shall name; and likewise on the queen's behalf, to the like number, as the Earl of Murray shall name; the same not to be any that have, by inheritance or office, cause to be in this parliament, to remain from the beginning of the summons of that parliament, until three months after that parliament; which hostages shall be pledges, that the friends of either part shall keep the peace in all cases, till, by this parliament, it be concluded, that the ordinance which the Queen of England shall devise for the government of the realm, (being not to the hurt of the crown of Scotland, nor contrary to the laws of Scotland for any man's inheritance, as the same was before the parliament at Edinburgh, in December 1567,) shall be established, to be kept and obeyed, under pain of high treason for the breakers thereof.

That by the same parliament also be established all exe-

cutions and judgments, given against any person to the death of the late king.

That by the same parliament, a remission be made universally from the Queen of Scots to any her contraries, and also from every one subject to another, saving that restitution be made of lands and houses, and all other things heritable, that have been, by either side, taken from them which were the owners thereof, at the committing of the Queen of Scots to Lochleven.

That by the same parliament it be declared, who shall be successors to the crown, next after the Queen of Scots and her issue; or else, that such right as the Duke of Chatelherault had, at the marriage of the Queen of Scots with the Lord Darnley, may be conserved and not prejudiced.

That the Queen of Scots may have leave of the queen's majesty of England twelve months after the said parliament, and that she shall not depart out of England, without special licence of the queen's majesty.

That the young king shall be nourished and brought up in England, till he be years of age.

It is to be considered, that, in this case, the composition between the queen and her subjects may be made with certain articles, outwardly to be seen to the world, for her honour, as though all the parts should come of her, and yet, for the surety of contraries, that certain betwixt her and the queen's majesty are to be included.

APPENDIX V.

Lord Burleigh's Advices to his Son, Robert Cecil.

SON ROBERT,

THE virtuous inclinations of thy matchless mother, by whose tender and godly care thy infancy was governed; together with thy education under so zealous and excellent a tutor; puts me in rather assurance than hope, that thou art not ignorant of that *summum bonum*, which is only able to make thee happy as well in thy death as in thy life; I mean, the true knowledge and worship of thy Creator and Redeemer; without which, all other things are vain and miserable. So that thy youth being guided by so sufficient a teacher, I make no doubt that he will furnish thy life with divine and moral documents. Yet, that I may not cast off the care beseeming a parent towards his child; or that thou shouldest have cause to derive thy whole felicity and welfare rather from others than from whence thou receivedst thy breath and being; I think it fit and agreeable to the affection I bear thee, to help thee with such rules and advertisements for the squaring of thy life, as are rather gained by experience than by much reading. To the end, that entering into this exorbitant age, thou mayest be the better prepared to shun those scandalous courses whereunto the world, and the lack of experience, may easily draw thee. And because I will not confound thy memory,

I have reduced them into ten precepts; and, next unto Moses' Tables, if thou imprint them in thy mind, thou shalt reap the benefit, and I the content. And they are these following:

I. When it shall please God to bring thee to man's estate, use great providence and circumspection in chusing thy wife; for from thence will spring all thy future good or evil. And it is an action of thy life, like unto a stratagem of war; wherein a man can err but once. If thy estate be good, match near home and at leisure; if weak, far off and quickly. Inquire diligently of her disposition, and how her parents have been inclined in their youth. Let her not be poor, how generous * soever; for a man can buy nothing in the market with gentility. Nor chuse a base and uncomely creature altogether for wealth; for it will cause contempt in others and loathing in thee. Neither make choice of a dwarf or a fool; for by the one thou shalt beget a race of pigmies; the other will be thy continual disgrace; and it will yirke † thee to hear her talk. For thou shalt find it to thy great grief, that there is nothing more fulsome ‡ than a she-fool.

And touching the guiding of thy house, let thy hospitality be moderate; and, according to the means of thy estate, rather plentiful than sparing, but not costly; for I never knew any man grow poor by keeping an orderly table. But some consume themselves through secret vices, and their hospitality bears the blame. But banish swinish drunkards out of thine house, which is a vice impairing health, consuming much, and makes no show. I never heard praise ascribed to the drunkard, but the well-bearing his drink; which is a better commendation for a brewer's horse or a drayman, than for either a gentleman or a serving-man. Beware thou

* *i. e.* Well-born. † *i. e.* Irk. ‡ *i. e.* Disgusting.

spend not above three of four parts of thy revenues; nor above a third part of that in thy house; for the other two parts will do no more than defray thy extraordinaries, which always surmount the ordinary by much: otherwise thou shalt live, like a rich beggar, in continual want. And the needy man can never live happily nor contentedly; for every disaster makes him ready to mortgage or sell. And that gentleman who sells an acre of land, sells an ounce of credit; for gentility is nothing else but ancient riches. So that, if the foundation shall at any time sink, the building must needs follow.—So much for the first precept.

II. Bring thy children up in learning and obedience; yet without outward austerity. Praise them openly, reprehend them secretly. Give them good countenance, and convenient maintenance, according to thy ability; otherwise thy life will seem their bondage, and what portion thou shalt leave them at thy death, they will thank death for it, and not thee. And I am persuaded that the foolish cockering* of some parents, and the over-stern carriage of others, causeth more men and women to take ill courses than their own vicious inclinations. Marry thy daughters in time, lest they marry themselves. And suffer not thy sons to pass the Alps; for they shall learn nothing there but pride, blasphemy, and atheism.† And if by travel they get a few broken languages, that shall profit them nothing more than to have one meat served in divers dishes. Neither, by my consent, shalt thou train them up in wars: for he that sets up his rest to live by that profession, can hardly be an honest man, or a

* *i. e.* Over-indulgence.

† This strong caution against travelling seems like a presage of the future evils it was to produce to his own family. His grandson William, the second Earl of Exeter, and his great-grandson Lord Roos, were both, when at Rome made proselytes to the popish religion.

good Christian. Besides, it is a science no longer in request than use. For soldiers in peace are like chimneys in summer.

III. Live not in the country without corn and cattle about thee. For he that putteth his hand to the purse for every expence of household, is like him that keepeth water in a sieve. And what provision thou shalt want, learn to buy it at the best hand. For there is one penny saved in four, betwixt buying in thy need, and when the markets and seasons serve fittest for it. Be not served with kinsmen, or friends, or men intreated to stay; for they expect much, and do little: nor with such as are amorous, for their heads are intoxicated. And keep rather two too few, than one too many. Feed them well, and pay them with the most; and then thou mayest boldly require service at their hands.

IV. Let thy kindred and allies be welcome to thy house and table. Grace them with thy countenance, and farther them in all honest actions; for, by this means, thou shalt so double the band of nature, as thou shalt find them so many advocates to plead an apology for thee behind thy back. But shake off those glow-worms, I mean parasites and sycophants, who will feed and fawn upon thee in the summer of prosperity; but, in an adverse storm, they will shelter thee no more than an arbour in winter.

V. Beware of suretyship for thy best friends. He that payeth another man's debt seeketh his own decay. But if thou canst not otherwise choose, rather lend thy money thyself upon good bonds, although thou borrow it. So shalt thou secure thyself, and pleasure thy friend. Neither borrow money of a neighbour or a friend, but of a stranger; where, paying for it, thou shalt hear no more of it. Otherwise thou shalt eclipse thy credit, lose thy freedom, and yet pay as dear as to another. But in borrowing of money, be precious of thy word; for he that hath care of keeping days of payment is lord of another man's purse.

VI. Undertake no suit against a poor man with receiving * much wrong; for, besides that thou makest him thy compeer, it is a base conquest to triumph where there is small resistance. Neither attempt law against any man, before thou be fully resolved that thou hast right on thy side: and then spare not for either money or pains. For a cause or two so followed and obtained, will free thee from suits a great part of thy life.

VII. Be sure to keep some great man thy friend, but trouble him not for trifles. Compliment him often with many, yet small gifts, and of little charge. And if thou hast cause to bestow any great gratuity, let it be something which may be daily in sight. Otherwise, in this ambitious age, thou shalt remain like a hop without a pole; live in obscurity, and be made a foot-ball for every insulting companion to spurn at.

VIII. Towards thy superiors be humble, yet generous. † With thine equals familiar, yet respective. Towards thine inferiors show much humanity, and some familiarity: as to bow the body; stretch forth the hand; and to uncover the head: with such like popular compliments. The first prepares thy way to advancement. The second makes thee known for a man well bred. The third gains a good report; which, once got, is easily kept. For right humanity takes such deep root in the minds of the multitude, as they are more easily gained by unprofitable curtesies, than by churlish benefits. Yet I advise thee not to affect, or neglect, popularity too much. Seek not to be Essex: shun to be Raleigh. ‡

IX. Trust not any man with thy life, credit, or estate. For it is mere folly for a man to enthral himself to his friend,

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* *i. e.* Though you receive. † *i. e.* Not mean.

‡ Essex was the idol of the people: his rival, Raleigh, their aversion, till

as though, occasion being offered, he should not dare to become an enemy.

X. Be not scurrilous in conversation, nor satirical in thy jests. The one will make thee unwelcome to all company; the other pull on quarrels, and get the hatred of thy best friends. For suspicious jests, when any of them savour of truth, leave a bitterness in the minds of those which are touched. And, albeit I have already pointed at this inclusively, yet I think it necessary to leave it to thee as a special caution; because I have seen many so prone to quip and gird, * as they would rather lose their friend than their jest. And if perchance their boiling brain yield a quaint scoff, they will travel to be delivered of it as a woman with child. These nimble fancies are but the froth of wit.

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his undeserved misfortunes attracted their compassion, and his heroism their applause.

* Mock and jibe.

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By JOHN MACDIARMID, Esq.

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Affairs of Scotland. Wentworth's conduct to the Scots. Sent for by the king. Arrival in England, November 1639. Advises war with the Scots. And a parliament. Created Earl of Strafford, and Lord Lieutenant. Success with Irish parliament. Dangerous illness. In the English parliament, April 1640. Appointed to command the troops. Adverse affairs. His mistaken views. Difficulties. Summoned to parliament, November 1640. Im-

peached of high treason. Articles of impeachment. His trial. His defence. Prosecuted by a bill of attainder. Bill passed in the House of Commons. Passed in the House of Lords. Strafford's letter to the king. Attainder sanctioned by the king. Strafford's preparations for death. Execution, 12th May 1641. Pp. 1—280.

EDWARD HYDE,

EARL OF CLARENDON.

BIRTH. Education at Oxford—in the Temple. Marriage. Success at the bar. Habits. In parliament, 1640. In parliament, November 3, 1640. His patriotic loyalty. Sent to the Tower. Introduction to the king. Confidential employment. Made Chancellor of the Exchequer. Favour with the king. Commission at Uxbridge. Situasion during the war. Of the Prince of Wales's council. Employed on his History. Joins the prince at the Hague. Hated by the queen. Ambassador to Spain. Reception there. Condemns the treaty of the young king with the Scots. Harassed by calumnies. Favoured by Charles. His extreme poverty. Persevering integrity. Death of Cromwell. State of affairs in England. General Monk. Restoration of the king. Hyde created Lord Chancellor. Principal minister. His public measures; Act of indemnity and oblivion—Settlement of the revenue—Exertions for the prerogative—Policy towards Scotland—Regulation of the national judicature—Settlement of religion. His disinterestedness. Devotion to the king. Shocked by the king's principles. Conduct relative to his daughter's marriage—To the marriage of the king—To the Duchess of Cleveland—The sale of Dunkirk—The act of

indulgence to dissenters—The Dutch war, 1665. His extreme unpopularity. Falls under the king's displeasure. Obnoxious to the parliament. Deprived of his office. Impeached of high treason. Leaves the kingdom. Ill treatment in France. Residence at Montpelier. Apostacy of his daughter to the Catholic faith. His desire to revisit England. Death. Pp. 281—411.

Freeman sc.

Wentworth

Earl of Strafford

LIVES

OF

BRITISH STATESMEN.

THOMAS WENTWORTH,

EARL OF STRAFFORD.

In delineating the character of this statesman, the biographer has to encounter difficulties superadded to the defects and obscurity of ancient records. The factions which agitated the contemporaries of Strafford, far from ceasing with the existing generation, divided posterity into his immoderate censurers, or unqualified admirers; and writers, whether hostile or friendly, have confounded his merits and defects with those of the transactions in which he was engaged. Even in the present day, an undisguised exposure of his virtues and vices might be misconstrued by many into a prejudiced panegyric, or an invidious censure of the man, as well

as of the cause. But it ought to be recollected that errors of judgment are distinct from depravity of moral principle; that the vicious may often, from selfish motives, be led to range themselves under sanctified banners; and that the virtuous, misled by false views, may temporarily participate in pernicious transactions. And if the partisans of either side are still too warm to prefer the discovery of truth to the assertion of their favourite opinions, let them at least be swayed by the consideration, that all characters in real life are mixed; and that transcendant virtues without blemish, or an unvaried series of aggravated vices, are alike received with incredulity.

Parentage. Thomas Wentworth derived from his birth all the advantages which an English commoner can enjoy. His father, Sir William, who continued to hold the manor of Wentworth, the residence of his ancestors before the Conquest, enjoyed one of the largest estates in Yorkshire; and being also connected, by intermarriages, with some of the most considerable families in the county, possessed very extensive influence.* Thomas, the eldest of twelve children, was born on the 13th of April 1593, in Chancery Lane, at the house of his maternal grandfather, a barrister of Lincoln's-Inn. †

* Strafford's Letters and Dispatches, dedication.

† Radcliffe's Essay towards the Life of Strafford, published at the conclusion of Strafford's Letters and Dispatches. Folio edit. 1739.

Being destined to inherit the honours and estate of the family, he was early initiated in the accomplishments suitable to his rank; and completed his literary education at St John's College, Cambridge. Education. At Cambridge. Of the plan or progress of his early studies, no particulars have been preserved. The writers of his memoirs, impressed chiefly by the striking transactions in which he was afterwards engaged, have too much neglected the circumstances by which his character was formed, and his early disposition developed.

His proficiency at the university seems, however, to have impressed his friends with a favourable opinion of his talents;* and the strong predilection, which he afterwards retained for this seat of learning, proves that neither were his studies unacceptable to him, nor his manners and application unapplauded by his teachers. At a future period of his life, we find him patronising the cause of his university with much earnestness, and receiving their acknowledgments of his exertions. Having occasion to represent some misconduct of a church dignitary who had been educated at Oxford, he could not help adding that such a divine was never produced at Cambridge.†

From the university, Wentworth travelled abroad Travels. 1610.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 1.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 189.

to complete his education, and spent upwards of a year in France. Here he had an opportunity of witnessing the dangerous revolutions of an arbitrary government; Henry IV., the best of princes, assassinated by a fanatic; Sully, the most virtuous of ministers, disgraced by the intrigues of a court; another daughter of Medicis at the head of the French councils; and the wounds which civil discord had inflicted, and political wisdom begun to heal, reopened by the follies and crimes of new rulers. During his residence abroad, Wentworth had the advantage of being attended by a travelling tutor, distinguished equally for his learning and his knowledge of the world. It is to the honour of both, that the friendship which they contracted was warm and permanent. So deeply impressed was Wentworth with the judgment and fidelity of his tutor, that, while he could retain him in his family, he uniformly consulted him in all matters of importance; * and when Mr Greenwood at length retired to the living, with which he had been provided by his pupil, the latter continued the same expressions of confidence and regard. Many years afterwards, we find Wentworth recommending to his nephews, who were also his wards, the counsels of Mr Greenwood, as their most infallible guides; † and from this faithful friend he himself also found

* Radcliffe's Essay. † Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 170.

the most essential assistance in his private affairs, when his own attention became engrossed with the business of government. At the conclusion of a very long letter relative to some domestic concerns, he apologises to Mr Greenwood: "I crave," says he, "that the necessity my affairs are in may plead my excuse for thus unmannerly troubling of you; and that, out of your charity, you would not deny your help to him that, upon a good occasion, would not deny his life to you." *

Disposition.

The energy of this expression corresponded to the warmth of Wentworth's feelings. The characteristic ardour of his affections began to be early remarked; and he proved no less decided in the prosecution of his enmities. Habituated to the indulgences of a plentiful fortune, and unaccustomed to opposition, he was choleric in the extreme, and the sudden violence of his resentment was apt to transport him beyond all bounds of discretion. Yet this fault was in a great measure atoned for by the manliness and candour with which it was acknowledged. When his friends, who perceived how detrimental it must prove to his future welfare, admonished him of it, their remonstrances were always taken in good part. He endeavoured to watch more diligently his infirmity, and felt his attachment increase towards those who advised him

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 488.

with sincerity and freedom. Sir George Radcliffe, the most intimate of his friends, informs us, that he never gained more on his trust and affection than when he told him of his weaknesses. *

At Court. 1613. Knighted.

On his return from abroad, Wentworth appeared at court, and was knighted by King James. In the reign of Henry VIII., and still more of Elizabeth, this distinction would have been a proof of merit, or of some claim to the favour of the sovereign; but their less wise, and more needy successor, employed his power of dispensing honours as a means of pecuniary supply.

Marriage and succession. 1614.

About this time Wentworth married Margaret Clifford, the eldest daughter of the Earl of Cumberland; and in the following year he succeeded, by the death of his father, to a baronetcy, and an estate of six thousand pounds a-year: a splendid fortune at the commencement of the seventeenth century, even when encumbered with provisions for seven brothers and four sisters. †

Domestic avocations.

His time was now occupied with the pleasures and cares which attend a country gentleman of distinction; and was successively devoted to the duties of hospitality, the improvement of his estate, the guardianship of the younger branches of his family, his favourite diversion of hawking, his books,

* Radcliffe's Essay. † Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 484.

and his correspondents.* The death of his bro- 1614.
ther-in-law, Sir George Savile, who left him guardian to his two sons, brought a large increase to his avocations, and drew forth some amiable traits of his character. Actuated by the remembrance of his friendship with their father, he watched over their education and their fortunes, with a degree of solicitude rarely produced by the ties either of kindred or humanity. So zealously did he prosecute a law-suit in which their estates had become involved, that during the long period of eight years which it continued, he made thirty journies to London on this account, and neglected not to attend the courts every term in which it came to be heard.†

But Wentworth was not destined to pass his life in the obscure though honourable employments of a country gentleman. He seems to have quickly attracted the notice of his county and of government; for he had not above a year enjoyed his inheritance, when he was sworn into the commission of peace, and nominated by Sir John Savile to succeed him as Custos Rutolorum, or Keeper of the 1615.
Archives, for the West Riding of Yorkshire, an office bestowed only on gentlemen of the first con-

Justice and Custos Rotulorum.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 2, 3, 4. Radcliffe's Essay.
† Radcliffe.

sideration. * The resignation of Savile, although apparently voluntary, proceeded from quarrels with his neighbours, the result of his restless disposition: † this had caused him to be denounced to government as a disturber of his county; ‡ and it was the moderation of the Lord Chancellor, Ellesmere, which permitted him to save appearances by his resignation.

1617. His difference with Buckingham.

Savile, however, was not of a temper to remain tranquil, and the successor, whom he had reluctantly nominated, soon became the object of his decided enmity. Having found means to interest in his favour William Duke of Buckingham, who at that period governed the councils of King James, he meditated a restoration to his former office. At his instance the duke wrote to Wentworth, informing him that the king, having again taken Sir John Savile into his favour, had resolved to employ him in his service; and requesting that he would freely return the office of Keeper of the Archives to the man who had voluntarily consigned it to his hands. Wentworth, instead of complying, exposed the misrepresentations of his antagonist, showed that his resignation had been wrung from him by necessity, and indicated his intention of coming to London to make good his assertion.

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* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 3. † Ibid. p. 2.

‡ See his letter, ibid.

The duke, though often regardless of giving offence in the pursuit of his purposes, did not judge this a sufficient occasion to risk the displeasure of the Yorkshire gentlemen. He replied with much seeming cordiality, assuring Wentworth that his former letter proceeded entirely from misinformation, and that the king had consented to dispense with his service, only from the idea that he himself desired an opportunity to resign.* This incident is remarkable, as having laid the first foundation of that animosity with Buckingham, which led the way to many questionable circumstances in the conduct of Wentworth. The duke was not of a disposition to forget even the slightest opposition to his will; and Wentworth was not a man to be injured with impunity.

Member of Parliament.

An opportunity soon occurred of retaliating the ill offices of Savile. A parliament having been summoned to meet in 1621, Wentworth had so well improved his connections and popularity, as to give him a confident hope of being returned for his county. The contests which, during the reign of James, had taken place between the king and the commons, and the power which that house was found to possess of controlling the measures of the crown, had now rendered a seat for a county a leading object of ambition. Gentlemen of the first

* See both letters in Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 4.

rank and fortune sought, in this station, an opportunity of signalizing their talents and influence, or of resisting the dreaded encroachments of the court. In the prosecution of this first object of his ambition, Wentworth gave indications of that vigour and address, by which he was afterwards distinguished. In some of his letters which still remain, we find him dexterously stimulating the exertions of his friends, or diverting the endeavours of his opponents. That his hopes might not be disappointed by vain professions, he procured the petty officers of the several hundreds to draw out lists of such voters as positively engaged to appear at York, on the day of election, in support of his interests.* The other candidates for the county were Sir John Savile, and Calvert, Secretary of State; and Wentworth now revenged his quarrel on the former, by espousing the interests of the latter. Having secured his own return, he zealously laboured to engage the freeholders in an opposition to the old disturber of their county; and, still apprehensive of Calvert's failure, from the extensive influence of Savile, his ardour for the attainment of his object seems to have rendered him little scrupulous about the means. In a letter to the secretary, "I have heard," says he, "that when Sir Francis Darcy opposed Sir Thomas Lake in a mat-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 8, 9, 10, 11.

ter of like nature, the lords of the council writ to Sir Francis to desist. I know my lord chancellor is much your friend in this business: a word to him, and such a letter would make an end of all." *

Wentworth appeared in the House of Commons at a period when an unusual combination of circumstances drew forth a display of intrepidity and eloquence. Our political constitution, having met with unexpected accidents which shocked and discomposed its component parts, exhibited effects, that seemed altogether surprising, when their causes were not understood. Yet the order in which the successive incidents arose was natural, and the consequences scarcely avoidable. A short exposition of this remarkable progress will not, perhaps, be devoid of interest, and is essentially necessary to a proper comprehension of Wentworth's principles and conduct.

Historical sketch of the English constitution.

The introduction, or rather the completion of the feudal system, in the reign of William I., gave a considerable addition to the royal authority. The proprietors of land were now made to acknowledge a dependence on their monarch; were bound to administer specific aids to his revenue; and in their tenures, acknowledged an obligation to follow his standard. Yet, unless within the limits of his

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 10.

own demesnes, he found his power circumscribed by very definite boundaries. The barons, who in these days formed the parliament, relinquished to the king the right of declaring war and concluding peace, but retained many privileges which rendered them an active portion of the government. They formed the last resort in judicial appeals, and possessed an indispensable voice in all laws affecting the nation at large. Without their consent, no tax beyond the aids stipulated by the feudal tenures could be levied on the subjects; and by their decision alone could any of their peers be deprived of his property, his liberty, or his life. With a precaution more to be admired than expected in a rude age, they procured the signature of the sovereign to written declarations of these privileges; and, by such charters, transmitted to their posterity a knowledge and assurance of rights, which oral tradition would soon have involved in doubt and perplexity. Of the Great Charter, so called from its more complete and accurate enumeration of national privileges, so anxious were the framers to diffuse the authority, that they caused a copy of it to be deposited in every diocese throughout the kingdom, and one to be transmitted to Ireland, for the benefit of that recent conquest.

When the representatives of the people, in consequence of great improvements in the state of the middle ranks, afterwards became a component part

of the Parliament, they shared in the powers and privileges previously attached to that body, obtaining some peculiarly to themselves, and enjoying others in common with the great barons. The last resort in judicial proceedings remained exclusively with the lords; the first motion for granting contributions was appropriated by the commons; while the discussion and sanction of all general laws became equally the privilege of both.

But these rights were not preserved and transmitted to posterity, without incessant precautions and repeated struggles. The subjects were interested in preserving undiminished the power of the Parliament; the king was prompted to gratify his ambition by the extension of his authority. Advanced, by the institution of feudal tenures, from the leader of independent chiefs, to be the sovereign of a great kingdom, he still found an uneasy restraint in the ancient privileges of his barons. To increase his revenue, to revenge his quarrels, to remove some obnoxious opponent, he was occasionally tempted to transgress the limits which long usage or express charters had prescribed, and to make illegal inroads on the persons and property of his subjects.

On these occasions, the barons appealed for redress to the same violent means by which the injuries had been inflicted. With arms in their hands, and an escort of military vassals in their train,

they came to the national council, compelled the monarch to renounce such acts for the future, and obliged him to give them a written assurance of his good faith, either by the grant of a new charter, or an explicit confirmation of those already obtained. The monarch, indeed, felt little scruple in violating promises which had been extorted from his apprehensions; and when the barons were dispersed, and their vassals disbanded, he too often renewed those oppressive acts which had roused their indignation. On such occasions, the barons had no other resource than to betake themselves
1215. again to arms, and to procure a new confirmation of rights, of which they found their courage the only effectual guardian. It was in this manner that the Great Charter was wrested from the fears of King John; he had, however, no sooner ratified it, than he proceeded to violate its provisions, and destroy its promoters; and its next confirmation was purchased by a civil war, and even by the introduction of a foreign power into the kingdom. Such was the apprehension infused into the barons by repeated infringements that, in the course of a few reigns, they procured from their monarchs thirty successive ratifications of the Great Charter.

During the reigns which immediately succeeded the Norman Conquest, the independent patrimony of the crown, united to the aids imposed by the military tenures, was sufficient to support the

peace-establishment of the monarch, while the military services, by which all the lands in the kingdom were held, provided an ample resource for the exigencies of war. In this state of things, the sovereign had no temptation, beyond the suggestions of unreasonable passions, to encroach on the rights of his subjects, nor they any means beyond their military force, to secure themselves against his injustice.

Only a few reigns, however, had elapsed, before the relative condition of the sovereign and the subject had undergone a material change. The introduction of manufactures and commerce gradually presented new objects of desire, and led to an increased expenditure; the rapacity of courtiers, and the improvident profusion of monarchs, produced a rapid dilapidation of the royal demesnes. The system of military tenures, then the only regular resource for warfare, was found to include, under a formidable appearance, a great deal of weakness and inefficiency. The vassals could not be dragged to the standard of their lords, nor the lords to the campaigns of their sovereign; and, at length, it became necessary to commute their military services for a very inadequate contribution in money. But if the sovereign now felt himself straitened even on ordinary occasions, far short did all his supplies fall of the resources required by the splendid ambition of succeeding monarchs.

The subjugation of Scotland and of France, the magnificent enterprises of Edward I. and Edward III. demanded too extensive preparations to be defrayed by any independent revenues appertaining to the crown.

In these circumstances, the only resource of the monarch was to apply to the liberality of Parliament, without whose authority he could levy no contribution on the subjects; and that assembly, having now, in their grants, a forcible argument to move the sovereign, employed it to procure those confirmations of their rights, which they had formerly obtained by force of arms. The most spirited and ambitious monarchs, the Edwards, intent on the prosecution of their warlike enterprises, made little scruple of purchasing supplies by the concession of statutes for the protection of popular rights. And so well did the Parliaments employ their advantage, that, by the conclusion of the reign of Edward III. they had ascertained, with considerable accuracy, the limits of their own privileges and the king's prerogative; and had passed those statutes for the protection of persons and property, which are still appealed to against the encroachments of arbitrary power.

Edward I. and III.

1377.

But in these rude ages, it was one thing to obtain a law, and another to insure its observance. During the interval of his necessities, the prince was enabled to violate his promises, infringe the

statutes, and trespass both on the persons and property of the subjects. Even the members of Parliament found themselves divested of their ancient security. The nobles, now dissipating their revenues on the luxuries of the age, no longer beset the throne with an array of armed retainers; and while the monarch was relieved from this source of apprehension, he could, with impunity, trample on the privileges of the commons, who individually possessed little influence, and, as a body, were held in contempt by the hereditary aristocracy. Sometimes he interrupted their deliberations; sometimes he endeavoured to extort their grants by threats, instead of winning them by concessions; and at other times he took more severe methods with the refractory members, and punished their opposition to his will by fines and imprisonment.

Yet amidst these disorders, it was evident, from the structure of our constitution, that the question between the power of the sovereign and the privileges of Parliament would, at a future period, be brought to a final decision, and the opposition of the one, or the encroachments of the other, be effectually terminated. When the people, by the progress of wealth and knowledge, should become too powerful and too high-spirited to permit the illegal treatment of their representatives, and when the monarch, by the progressive increase of expence, or by farther dilapidations of the royal de-

mesnes, should find his revenues inadequate, the important discussion was no longer to be avoided. It would then become indispensable, either that he should submit, with good faith, to the limitations of his power; or that, betaking himself to violence, he should break through our ancient constitution, abolish the privileges of Parliament, and render himself the undisputed master of the lives and property of his subjects.

Towards this eventful crisis, affairs continued gradually to approach, but in their progress were accelerated or retarded by various accidents. During the sanguinary contests between the houses of York and Lancaster, the greatest families among the nobility had been extirpated, all of them had suffered in their influence, and the Commons, being brought more nearly to a level with the Peers, occupied a more conspicuous station in Parliament. But the same causes rendered the monarchs less regardful of the privileges of the Commons, which formerly they had been willing to extend as a counterbalance to the powerful barons; and, at the accession of the house of Tudor, the Parliament felt a great diminution of that authority which it had enjoyed a century before. Henry VII. held in his hand the sword of a conqueror; and while frequent insurrections gave him a plausible pretext for vengeance, it was not without imminent hazard that any member of Parliament could oppose his

will. By the resumption of grants, by forfeitures, by arbitrary fines, and an economy equal to his rapacity, Henry had amassed treasures beyond any monarch of his age; yet the progressive increase of expence was silently producing circumstances against which such precautions could not long avail; and when his avarice tempted him to make demands on his Commons, their resistance showed him that they possessed a powerful check for his more indigent successors.

From the treasures amassed by his father, Henry VIII. for some time supplied his profusion; from the pillage of the monasteries he derived some extraordinary resources; and the dread of his displeasure, or a desire to promote the Reformation, occasionally moved the liberality of the Commons. Yet at times they showed the power as well as the spirit to resist his demands; and they eventually gained more than they suffered from his precipitate passions. At the commencement of his reign he received from them a confirmation of his title; he delivered up to their vengeance the ministers of his father's extortions; he procured their sanction to his innovations in religion, to his marriages, to his repeated alterations in the order of succession, and showed, that he accounted their authority sufficient to ratify a change of any description. At no period was the omnipotence of Parliament a more established doctrine. It was not enough that More

confessed its power to make or depose a king; he incurred a capital sentence, because he would not acknowledge its right to confer a control over the consciences of men.*

During the short reigns of Edward and Mary, the ascendancy of the Parliament increased, as well as the difficulties of the prince. While the debts contracted by Henry were not liquidated by Edward, and were greatly augmented by Mary, the royal revenue was still farther impoverished by alienations of the crown lands. The determined resistance which the Parliament made to the demands of the bigoted but odious Mary, exalted its popularity, and placed it in a still more favourable condition to avail itself of the distresses of the crown.

Elizabeth. That conflict between the Crown and the Commons, which now seemed on the verge of commencing, was for a while delayed by the spirit and the prudence of Elizabeth. Her concurrence with the undeviating frugality of Burleigh, enabled her to free the crown from its overwhelming encumbrances; and to provide for more than her ordinary expences, in her independent resources. As she could not endure to have her lofty pretensions called in question, she never applied to her Commons, unless in a case of evident necessity,

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* See the Life of More.

and there were various circumstances which rendered them well inclined to supply her wants. The complaisance due to her sex, the admiration excited by her talents, her conspicuous economy, and her connection with the dearest interests of the Protestant religion, occasionally drew from them more liberal grants than had been accorded to any of her predecessors. Yet even these advantages could not prevent them from mingling a discussion of their grievances with that of her demndsa, or from uniting in their projects the limitation of her power with the relief of her wants. At times they burst forth into those enthusiastic pretensions of liberty, which the progress of knowledge had now developed and enhanced. * Elizabeth employed all her vigour and address to repress this rising spirit. She answered their high claims by assumptions still more lofty: she endeavoured to curb their freedom of speech by high-sounding injunctions, and even by imprisoning the most refractory members: she strove to conceal her inability to maintain such violent stretches of power, by receding, as of her own free grace, while it was yet time: and, to display the independence of her resources, she more than once remitted the supplies which they had granted. Yet she precipitated the distresses of the crown by a large alienation

* See the speeches of Peter Wentworth in Hume, Chap. xl.

of the crown lands: and she put a fatal weapon into the hands of the factious, by the unexampled act of bringing a sovereign to the scaffold.

James I. In the combination of circumstances which attended James on his accession, important discussions between the sovereign and the people were not long to be avoided. While his independent resources, from alienations and the increased expence of living, were scarcely sufficient for his ordinary occasions; his parliament was not likely to grant him further supplies without exacting reciprocal concessions. There were many abuses to be reformed, many privileges to be asserted, many branches of the prerogative to be defined. The Commons now included a large proportion of the wealth and talents of the country: they were too much connected with the peers, by the ties of kindred and condition, to have separate interests; and if parliament had shown a disposition to resist the encroachments of the most respected of their native sovereigns, it was not probable that they would show deference to an untried foreigner.

In this conjuncture, which took place during the youth of Wentworth, two expedients would have been requisite for the prevention of civil dissensions: the limitation of the royal prerogative by barriers so clearly defined, as effectually to guard the subject from encroachments; and the separation of the king's expenditure from that of the public.

Without the former of these provisions, it was in vain to expect that the Commons would pay liberally towards a government which filled them with apprehension. Without the latter, no concession could purchase security to the prerogative: every grant for national purposes would continue to be regarded as a favour to the monarch, and a ground for demanding a farther limitation of his power. But of these expedients, the separation of the king's expenditure from that of the nation, however simple and obvious it may now appear, does not seem to have once occurred either to the prince or the people.

Despotic disposition of James.

The limitation of the prerogative was a doctrine to which James could not endure to listen. Ignorant of the constitution of England, and in a great measure of the feelings of mankind, the excess of his natural timidity made him regard any discussion of his power with horror. Anxious to believe what he desired to be true, and misled by a crowd of flatterers, he had reasoned himself into a conviction that his power was derived from some high ordinance of the Divinity; that his subjects were delivered over to him to use according to his good pleasure; that their rights were the mere gifts of his free grace; that, by his permission, they might lay their grievances at the foot of his throne; but that it was the height of impiety for them to resist, or even to question the acts of one who was

accountable to God alone. These visionary notions, the offspring of a weak judgment and a consummate vanity, James did not attempt to conceal; he was led, by the same folly which engendered them, to thrust them forward on all occasions. Even while he held out his hand for supplies, he told his parliament, that, "as to dispute what God *may do* is blasphemy, but what God *wills*, that divines may lawfully and do ordinarily dispute and discuss; so it is sedition in subjects to dispute what a king *may* do in the height of his power. But just kings will ever be willing to declare what they will do, if they will not incur the curse of God. I will not be content," he continues, "that my power be disputed upon; but I shall ever be willing to make the reason appear of my doings, and rule my actions according to *my* laws." *

These maxims of arbitrary power were not merely the transient ebullitions of a distempered vanity: they were occasionally developed in practice, under very offensive circumstances. By a proclamation, James interfered with the rights of election, specified a disqualification which should incapacitate any member from holding his seat; and, placing this edict on a footing with a statute, declared every offender against it to be punishable with fine and

* Hume from King James's Works, p. 531.

imprisonment.* He interfered also with the freedom of debate among the Commons, dissolved them in wrath when they would not accede to his requisitions, and imprisoned such of the members as had ventured to signalize themselves by opposition. Determined rather to encounter extremities, than submit to the limitation of his authority, he is said to have soon formed the resolution of governing, if possible, without parliaments. †

A rigid economy, by diminishing the amount of the arbitrary exactions now requisite, might for a season have lessened the public discontent. In avoiding foreign wars, the great source of expenditure, James, indeed, exhibited the utmost caution: but so nearly was this caution allied to pusillanimity, that he became contemptible abroad, without gaining, among his subjects, the reputation of prudence. Their ridicule was, however, converted into indignation, when they observed that the respectability of the kingdom was neglected, only to procure resources for the miserable dissipation of a court. ‡ His largesses to his servile courtiers and his needy favourites were as profuse as if his wealth had been immeasurable. Warrants under the privy seal to levy contributions from particular persons, § an arbitrary increase of the rates of customs fixed by

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* Winwood, Vol. II. p. 18, 19.
† Wilson, p. 46.
‡ Rushworth, Vol. I. 151.
§ Ibid.

law, the sale of monopolies, excessive fines in the Star Chamber, were the means which he employed to replenish his exhausted exchequer; and the nation beheld the stretches of despotism employed for the gratification of the meanest corruption. *

The open opposition of the subjects to the sovereign might, for some time, have been repressed by the veneration attached to the person of kings. Among our countrymen, this sentiment had been greatly exalted by the talents, the vigour, the intrepidity of the race of Tudor; and, in Elizabeth, they had admired a stateliness and energy, which seemed to exalt her above her sex, and render her the appropriate possessor of the diadem. But the figure, the manners, the disposition of James were incompatible with sentiments of reverence. A thin person, of middle stature, swelled out with clothes, loosely hung around him, and quilted to resist a dagger; a homely countenance, a tongue too big for the mouth, and a correspondent utterance, were all calculated to excite ridicule. † Childish and often coarse in his ordinary conversation, he never failed to intermingle with his most dignified public exhibitions some strokes of burlesque. While he showed a pitiful jealousy of

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 157. Rapin, Vol. II. p. 185.
† Neal, Vol. II. p. 140.

men of great parts, * he chose his favourites for the most superficial qualifications, and submitted to their influence with almost implicit deference. The discreetest of his minions, whom he created Earl of Montgomery, pretended to no qualification but skill in dogs and horses; † and if men were amazed to see Carre and Villiers, two ignorant though handsome youths, successively invested with the supreme direction of public affairs, they were still more scandalized to behold the monarch take the birch in his hand and act the pedagogue to his young minions. With a boyish familiarity, those who approached him were addressed by nicknames: ‡ and if his foreign diplomacy brought him little honour, he was at least dexterous in making matches among his courtiers. In his conversation, the same folly was softened by an appearance of innocence. He swore profanely, and often got drunk; and when his senses returned, he would weep like a child, and hope that God would not impute to him his infirmities. §

The respect which James lost as a man, he might still have retained as the fountain of honour; and, by a judicious distribution of the ensigns of

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* Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 59. † Ibid.

‡ His son, the prince, he called Baby Charles; his prime minister, Buckingham, he named Stenny.

§ Neal, Vol. II. p. 140.

rank, might have surrounded his throne with an able and high-spirited nobility. But those distinctions, so warily bestowed by the sagacious Elizabeth, were lavished, by her imprudent successor, without measure or discrimination. A needy and obscure minion no sooner caught his attention, than he was immediately raised to the highest honours; and the general contempt, excited by this profusion of titles,* was seen in pasquinades, purporting to be "aids to short memories in recollecting the new nobility." But still more degraded did honorary distinctions become, when James affixed to them a price, and considered them as a means of relieving his necessities. A proportionate price was affixed to each rank; and an order of hereditary knighthood, under the denomination of baronets, was instituted to tempt the vanity of less wealthy purchasers.* So low was the simple title of knighthood now held in the estimation of the court, that all who possessed forty pounds a-year were compelled, under a penalty, to receive it, or, by payment of the fees, to compound for declining it. †

Religious opinions at that period engrossed great-

* Rapin, Vol. II. p. 185. The purchase-money of an Earl's patent was twenty thousand pounds, of a Viscount's fifteen thousand, of a Baron's ten thousand; while a Baronetcy could be had for one thousand and ninety-five pounds.

† Rapin, Vol. II. p. 185.

ly the minds of men, and, from a skilful management of them, James might have derived a vast increase of influence. At his accession, the adherents of the established forms, and the abettors of a farther reformation, were competitors for the favour of their new monarch. From his presbyterian education, the latter expected at least a cessation of the persecution against them; and the former would have been sufficiently willing to compound for their apprehensions, by this concession. But James, without skill to balance these factions, and without any steady principles in regard to either doctrine or forms, hastened to embrace exclusively the party which most willingly received his maxims of absolute power. In Scotland, a zealous presbyterian, he had branded the episcopal service as "an evil mass said in English;" and had told his parliament "that he minded not to bring in Papistical or Anglicane bishops." * But he had spent only a few months in England, when *No Bishop, No King*, became his current maxim, and to root out presbyterians and puritans his favourite project. † The leading bishops had the penetration to discover his weak side, and availed themselves of it with dexterity. They readily acknowledged whatever pretensions he chose to arrogate, and were

* Calderwood, p. 256, 418.

† Neal, Vol. II. p. 3. Hume, VI. p. 13.

forward to maintain his divine right, when they found him willing to allow them an equally sublime origin. Nothing could be more gross than the flattery of several of these unworthy sons of the church. When James gave his sanction to that high commission and oath *ex officio*, against which we have seen Burleigh remonstrating, Archbishop Whitgift cried out in transport, "Undoubtedly your Majesty speaketh by the special assistance of God's Spirit!" * When the king had called before him some puritan doctors to a public disputation, and, to use his own phrase, "had soundly peppered them off," Bishop Bancroft, the first asserter of the divine right of episcopacy, † falling on his knees, exclaimed, "My heart melteth for joy, that Almighty God, of his singular mercy, has given us such a king, as since Christ's time has not been." ‡ When James, at his table, proposed the question, "Whether he might not take his subjects' money when he needed it, without all this formality of parliament?" a complaisant bishop immediately replied, "God forbid that you should not; you are the breath of our nostrils." § Dr Cavel, vicar-general to the archbishop, wrote a book, in which he affirmed that the king is not bound by

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* Neal, Vol. II. p. 19. Kennet, p. 665.

† Neal, Vol. II. p. 83. ‡ Ibid. p. 18.

§ Hume, Vol. VI. p. 75. from preface to Waller's Works.

his laws, nor by his coronation oath; that he is not obliged to call parliaments to make laws, but may do it without them; and that it is a great favour to admit the consent of the subject in giving subsidies. Dr Blackwood, another clergyman, wrote on the same subjects, and forgot so far what he owed to the respectability of his profession as to attempt to prove "that the English were all slaves from the Norman Conquest." *

In opposition to these doctrines, the puritans proceeded with a very bad grace to adduce those principles of government, which they had discovered in their free investigation into civil and religious institutions. James, struck with the contrast, chose his party without hesitation. He now affirmed that presbytery, which he associated with puritanism, "agreed as well with monarchy, as God and the devil;" † and having fortified the bishops with his authority, proceeded to the destruction of this foe both in England and Scotland. Bancroft, created archbishop as a reward of his services, having revived those articles of Whitgift, which Burleigh had declared to resemble the Roman inquisition, ‡ deprived by their means many clergymen of their livings. § To arm himself with still

* Neal, Vol. II. p. 72.

† Hume, Vol. VI. p. 14, from Fuller's Ecclesiastical History.

‡ See Life of Burleigh.

§ Neal, Vol. II. p. 38, says three hundred; Heylyn, Aer. Rediviv. p. 376, makes the number, in all, only forty-five.

greater terrors, he endeavoured to wrest from the courts of Westminster-hall some of their undoubted rights. * The puritans laboured to procure a mitigation of their sufferings by a petition to the throne; but James showed them what they had to expect, by sending their deputies unheard to jail. †

There was nothing on which James more valued himself than his skill in theological disputation; and it was acknowledged that he wielded the controversial pen with far more address than the imperial sceptre. But while the mutability of his religious tenets exposed his sincerity to suspicion, the severity, and even the cruelty, with which he maintained his successive opinions, seemed very inconsistent with the mild spirit of Christianity. At first a zealous adherent to Calvinism, he persecuted the Arminians both at home and abroad: ‡ but finding that the abettors of the lat-

* Neal, Vol. II. p. 37. † Winwood's Memorials.

‡ Vorstius, a disciple of Arminius, had been chosen to succeed him as a professor of divinity at Leyden. James remonstrated with the States against this open encouragement of one whom he styled an *arch-heretic, a pest, a monster of blasphemies;* and insisted on their joining him in an attempt to "send back to hell these cursed Arminian heresies that had newly broke forth." As to the burning of this man, he generously left them to their own Christian wisdom; but added, however, "that surely never heretic better deserved the flames." He termed Vorstius a *wicked atheist;* Arminius *an enemy to God;* and Bertius, who had asserted that

ter tenets among his clergy were more friendly to his maxims of absolute power, he came over to them with all his zeal, and directed his execrations against the Calvinists. Legate and Wightman, two persons who held some opinions inclining to Arianism, he had the inhumanity to deliver over to the flames. *

But Protestants of every denomination were alarmed and irritated, when they discovered that James entertained a decided sympathy with the Catholic worship. † That church, against whose abominations he had been taught to exclaim, he found to be a more strenuous assertor of despotic power than any Protestant community whatever. The pomp and splendour of her worship were exactly calculated to captivate his mind; and could he have got rid of the uneasy doctrine of the pope's supremacy, he declared himself inclined to show her votaries every indulgence. In his first speech to parliament, "I acknowledge," said he, "the church of Rome to be our mother church, though defiled with some infirmities and corruptions. And as I

March 19, 1604.

"the saints might fall from grace," he declared to be "worthy of the fire." The States contented themselves with dismissing Vorstius; and Brandt, their historian, very justly holds it forth, as "a very glorious thing for the United Provinces, that the blood of no heretic had been shed in that country since the Reformation."

* Neal, Vol. II. p. 92, 93, from Fuller, b. x. p. 63, 64.

† Neal, Vol. II. p. 26. Hume, Vol. VI. p. 39.

am no enemy to the life of a sick man, because I would have his body purged of ill humours; no more am I an enemy to that church, because I would have her reform her errors, not wishing the downthrowing of the temple, but that it might be purged and cleansed from corruption." By such imprudent and explicit declarations, the Protestants were alarmed, and began to suspect their monarch of a design to reintroduce an abhorred superstition.

With a like infatuation, James proceeded to disturb the sobriety of manners, and the religious impressions of his subjects. Without reference to the divine origin of the Sabbath, the appropriation of one day in each week for religious and moral instruction, for reflection on our duties, our errors, and the means of amendment, for reviewing our condition here, and weighing our hopes hereafter, seems the wisest of institutions for the promotion of virtue and happiness. It is thus alone that the hard-wrought labourer finds leisure to receive instruction, or to communicate to his children the fruit of his experience; while the eager man of business, as well as the abandoned libertine, meeting with these frequent intervals of religious worship, are led to think of their duties, as well as of their gains or their pleasures. From this spring of instruction and serious reflection, knowledge and good morals naturally flow; and the blessings of a wise and vigorous government become inviola-

ble, because they become thoroughly understood. But James, though he could learnedly discuss the decrees of God, knew nothing of the moral operation of religion. Addicted to the pleasures of the table, and immersed in the dissipation of a court, he regarded the strict morals and serious demeanour of the puritans with suspicion and aversion. He determined that his subjects should be as gay and as voluptuous as himself; and observing that the puritans in particular devoted the Sabbath to sobriety and religious exercises, he took measures to counteract this unwelcome example. He published "a declaration to encourage recreations and sports on the Lord's day," authorizing all games which were lawful through the week; and dancing, leaping, vaulting, May-games, Whitsun-ales, and Morrice-dances, were recommended as proper amusements for Sunday evening. But against the order which commanded this declaration to be read in all the churches, the more serious members of the establishment revolted no less than the puritans. Archbishop Abbot, the successor of Bancroft, refused to have it read where he resided, and James did not venture to insist on compliance. *

The number of those who desired a farther reform in the discipline of the church of England was now comparatively small, and that of the dis-

* Neal, Vol. II. p. 174, 175.

senters from her doctrines was still smaller: yet to these two classes the term puritans had been hitherto confined. But James, having wrought himself into a thorough contempt and detestation of these sectaries, imagined he could not more effectually degrade those who opposed his arbitrary exactions, and endeavoured to set limits to his power, than by branding them all with the name of puritans. By this impolitic language, which became a fashion among the courtiers, the term which he employed for degradation became exalted. The puritans, associated under the same appellation with the most wealthy, enlightened, and respected classes of the community, acquired new consideration; and those who were imprudently assimilated in name, gradually became assimilated in opinion.*

Nor were these the only circumstances that produced unpopularity to James. The partiality displayed towards Scotish courtiers had made him, on his accession, be regarded with an evil eye by the English. His undisguised aversion to his eldest son, the darling of the nation, was construed into an unnatural jealousy; and his apathy, on the premature death of this young prince, bore too striking a contrast to the general lamentation.†

* Neal, Vol. II. p. 123. Life of Col. Hutchinson, p. 61.

† James not only heard of his son Prince Henry's death, without discomposure, but even forbade any court mourning on the oc-

His refusal to interfere in the cause of his daughter, the Queen of Bohemia, though founded on solid reasons, excited much censure, for men could not forgive either his indifference to a son-in-law, or his dereliction of a Protestant prince. * The jealousy of his subjects was roused when James, conceiving that the daughter of a powerful king was alone a proper match for his son, began to enter into an alliance and negociation with Spain and Rome. And this intercourse excited the indignation of the public, when they saw Raleigh, celebrated for his heroism, and pitied for his long sufferings, dragged from his prison; and, under colour of an almost obsolete sentence, sacrificed to the vengeance of the Spaniards. † Such were the grievances of the nation at large: the

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casion. He is said to have been exceedingly jealous of the young prince's talents and popularity.

* His daughter, Elizabeth, was married to the Elector Palatine, who, upon being raised to the throne of Bohemia by the Protestant subjects of that crown, which was elective, was attacked by the united force of the emperor and the popish electors, and stripped, both of his new kingdom and his hereditary dominions. James, much to the general discontent, beheld in tranquillity a catastrophe which, indeed, he could not probably have averted. It is from this branch of the royal stock that our present monarch is descended.

† Raleigh was confined during eighteen years for a very dubious charge of conspiracy; and was at length, on this obsolete accusation, put to death, at the instance of the Spaniards, whom he had offended by some attacks on their South American settlements.

aristocracy, more dangerous from their station and influence, were farther exasperated by the arrogance of the favourite, Buckingham. That minion, having acquired a complete ascendancy over his master, had assumed the complete direction of national affairs. According to his sovereign pleasure, measures were framed, negociations conducted, ministers appointed or displaced; and, amidst all these abuses, he was led, by violence of temper, to aggravate injustice by rudeness, and exasperate opposition by a vindictive spirit.

1621. Such were the principal causes, both remote and immediate, from which the national temper had received its complexion, when Wentworth first appeared in parliament. The conduct of James, and its influence on the fate of his successor, bears no faint resemblance to that of Louis XV. of France. Ten years had elapsed since the houses were last assembled, and, in that long interval, James had exhausted every expedient, which he durst hazard, to procure supplies without their intervention. But as his necessities had multiplied beyond his resources, he was at length driven to solicit from parliament what he had in vain attempted to derive from his prerogative. The recovery of the Palatinate, a favourite enterprise with the nation, he laid hold of as the pretext for his demands; and endeavoured to sooth the angry recollections of

the members, by ample apologies for his late errors.* These pretences, and these apologies, the Commons appeared to take in good part. Consisting of men whose independence, supported by large fortunes, and extensive influence, had acquired strength from living at a distance from court, amidst their tenants and connections; they felt their own importance, and proceeded in their objects without violence or precipitation. They perceived the advantage which they possessed in holding the purse-strings of the nation; and resolved to avail themselves deliberately of this single, but insurmountable check, in restraining the excesses of arbitrary authority.

* For the recovery of the Palatinate, which he never attempted, unless by some fruitless negociations, he pledged himself with an unusual vehemence of language. He told the parliament that he should render his persuasions effectual by the strong hand of an army; and, added he, "I will engage my crown, my blood, and my soul, in the recovery." His excuses for past faults, if not conveyed with much dignity, possessed at least a blunt frankness not ill calculated to disarm resentment. "I confess," said he, "I have been liberal in my grants; but, if I be informed, I will amend all hurtful grievances. But who shall hasten after grievances, and desire to make himself popular, he hath the spirit of Satan. If I may know my errors, I will reform them. I was, in my first parliament, a novice: and, in my last, there was a kind of beasts called *Undertakers*, a dozen of whom undertook to govern the last parliament, and *they led me*." See his speech in Rushworth's Collections, Vol. I. p. 22, 23. The speech is somewhat differently given by Franklyn; but more as to the form of expression than the import.

Of the doubtful sincerity of James, in his professions of a tender regard for their liberties, and of an anxiety to remedy abuses, they could not fail to be aware. Even in the interval betwixt issuing the writs for Parliament, and its opening, he had endeavoured to suppress all liberty of writing or speech concerning public affairs, by a proclamation, in which he "commanded all, from the highest to the lowest, not to intermeddle, by pen or speech, with state-concernments, and secrets of empire, either at home or abroad; which were no fit themes for vulgar persons, or common meetings." * Yet the Commons, overlooking this significant indication, sought to conciliate his good will, by making the supply of his necessities the first of their measures. Contrary to the usual course of procedure, they voted him two subsidies at the very commencement of their session; and when they afterwards proceeded to inquire into grievances, they allowed not a murmur of disrespect towards the king or his ministers, and touched only on such glaring abuses as were disavowed and given up by the court. † So liberal and moderate did this conduct appear, as to draw forth the public acknowledgments of the king:—"The House of Commons at this time," says he, in a speech to Parliament, "have showed greater love, and used me

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 21. † Ibid. p. 24.

with more respect in all their proceedings, than ever any House of Commons have hitherto done to me, or, I think, to any of my predecessors." *

This happy understanding seemed to promise the most fortunate effects; but James having procured the relief of his present necessities, began, with a more scrupulous eye, to look after his prerogative. The abuses which the Commons had undertaken to investigate, he did not propose to defend; but he disliked that they should acquire, in the eyes of the people, the merit of the abolition, and appear the reformers of excesses which he had tolerated. He therefore surprised the Commons, in the midst of their labours, by announcing an intended prorogation, reproved their petition for a prolongation of their sitting, as a farther encroachment on his prerogative; and taught them, by this precipitate jealousy, to be less forward in their grants, till they had first secured the desired concessions. †

Before the term to which he had prorogued Parliament, James was overtaken by his necessities, and found it expedient to reassemble the Houses three months earlier than he once intended. ‡ Unfortunately his measures, during the recess, were ill calculated to allay their irritation. He had indeed reformed most of the abuses which had

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 25. † Ibid. p. 35. ‡ Ibid. p. 39.

excited complaint; but he had been careful to insert in the proclamation, that "he needed not the
November 10, 1621. assistance of Parliament to reform them." * In a new edict against political writings and conversation, he had carried his encroachments on freedom a step farther, and threatened severity, "as well against the concealers of such discourses, as against the boldness of audacious tongues and pens."† In the progress of the Spanish match, new concessions, it was apprehended, had been made in favour of the Catholics; and, amidst the feeble remonstrances of James, the Elector Palatine had been finally stript of his dominions. While the Popish princes of Spain, France, and Germany, were proceeding, with a high hand, to exterminate Protestantism, the English began to tremble anew for their religion, and to look with jealousy and resentment on their monarch, who so closely confederated with its enemies. James had even had the imprudence to infringe the most indispensable privileges of the Commons, and had resented their displeasure at the prorogation, by committing to prison Sir Edwin Sandys, one of their most popular members.

It was in vain that, after their late experience, James now endeavoured to draw from them speedy supplies, by representing the immediate exigencies

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 36. † Ibid.

of the Palatinate, and by assuring them that they should afterwards be permitted to continue their sittings "as long as the necessity of the state should require." * The Commons replied by a petition and remonstrance, in which they stated what they conceived to be the most imminent dangers of the nation, and the most expedient remedies. To remove the pressing apprehensions of popery, they recommended that the penal laws against the Catholics should be strictly executed, the Spanish match broken off, the prince espoused to one of his own religion, and war immediately declared against all powers concerned in the spoliation of the Palatinate. To show their intention to grant supplies, as well as their expectation of concessions in return, they said they had already resolved to give, at the end of this session, one entire subsidy, for the sole purpose of relieving the Palatinate; and humbly besought his majesty, that "he would then also vouchsafe to give life, by his royal assent, to such bills as, before that time, should be prepared for his majesty's honour, and the good of the people." †

The intention of presenting this petition was no sooner reported to James, than, indignant that they should presume to interfere with matters appertaining to his *craft*, as he usually termed it; he

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 39. † Ibid. p. 40, 41, 42.

wrote to the speaker, intimating his displeasure that the Commons should venture "to argue and debate publicly of matters far above their reach and capacity, to his high dishonour, and breach of prerogative royal." He commanded them to abstain, for the future, from all such discussions: and that they might not be ignorant of his resolution to enforce obedience, he desired the speaker to inform them in his name, "that he thought himself very free and able to punish any man's misdemeanours in parliament, as well during their sitting as after; which he meant not thenceforth to spare, upon any occasion of any man's insolent behaviour." *

To acquiesce in this formidable assumption, would have been to renounce all their privileges, and annihilate their utility. They drew up a new petition, equally firm and moderate, defending the tenor of their former remonstrance, and asserting that their freedom of debate, a privilege altogether indispensable, was "their ancient and undoubted right, an inheritance received from their ancestors, and often confirmed by his majesty's own speeches and messages." †

The reply of James was no less explicit and peremptory than his letter to the speaker. He compared their audacious interposition in affairs of state, when called on for supplies, to the presump-

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 43, 44. † Ibid. p. 46.

tion of a merchant who should imagine that his advance of a loan for carrying on a war entitled him to dictate its operations. He reminded them that he was an old and experienced king, who needed none of their lessons; and advised them, in their deliberations, to recollect the old maxim, that no man should pretend beyond his own craft.* As to his son's match, he "desired to know how they could have presumed to determine in that point, without committing high treason?" Their claims as an ancient and undoubted right and inheritance, he could not allow; but accounted it a more proper style, "that their privileges were derived from his grace, and the permission of him and his ancestors." He, however, assured them that they had nothing to dread, if they took care not "to trench on his prerogative;" which, added he, "would enforce us, or any just king, to retrench of their privileges, them that would pare his prerogative and the flowers of his crown." †

These pretensions and threats produced much agitation among the Commons, and a few days afterwards, a commission for their adjournment to the eighth of February was lodged in the hands of the clerk. Apprehensive of a dissolution, they pro- December 19.

* *Ne sutor ultra crepidam,* was the literal expression of the king.

† Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 46 to 52.

ceeded, without delay, to vindicate, in a protestation, their parliamentary rights and privileges. Here their claims to freedom of speech, their inviolability for all proceedings in parliament, and their title to debate and counsel on all affairs of state, were asserted in language remarkable for its vigour, temperance, and decision. *

Enraged at this new trespass of the Commons, James commanded their journal-book to be brought to him in council; tore out, with his own hand, the leaf which contained the protestation; and, by a speedy dissolution of parliament, proved his de-
January 6, 1622. termination to set their pretensions at defiance. To intimidate them more effectually, he laid his hands on the more active members: some he imprisoned, and others he exiled, under pretence of public employments, to Ireland. To silence the general murmurs, he enforced his former proclamations against speaking of state affairs; and commanded the judges, in their several circuits, to do exemplary justice on all such offenders. †

Conduct in Parliament. The part which Wentworth acted, during the two sessions of this parliament, was conspicuous chiefly for its circumspection and moderation. We indeed find him active in promoting the expulsion of a member, who had spoken with much irreverence of a bill for repressing those licentious sports

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 52, 53. † Ibid. 55.

on the Sabbath, which the royal proclamation had authorized and encouraged; and when the king hazarded the assertion that the privileges of the Commons were enjoyed by his permission, and their deliberations controllable by his authority, Wentworth urged the house to declare explicitly that their privileges were their right and inheritance, and the direction of their proceedings subject to no cognizance but their own. The abrupt dissolution of parliament, he followed with expressions of regret and apprehension. * Yet his language towards the court was always respectful, and his eloquence more frequently employed to moderate than excite the zeal of his colleagues. Connected intimately with some members of the administration, and holding an office, which, though inconsiderable, might lead to others of more importance, he seems to have been more solicitous to avoid unacceptable conduct, than to obtain distinction from his opposition. The favour, which he found means to acquire with James, was afterwards his frequent boast. †

From the mutual animosity with which the king and the parliament had separated, it was not to be expected that James would have a speedy recourse to this national council. Yet within two years after the angry dissolution, writs were issued for a

Again in Parliament, 1624.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 15. † Ibid. p. 35, 36.

new parliament; and that body assembled to hear language of unusual concession from the throne. Changes that had occurred in the interval, and the all-powerful ascendancy of Buckingham, produced this altered tone. That favourite had perceived the necessity of ingratiating himself with the prince, who was soon to mount the throne; and the repeated delays of the Spanish match seemed to afford him a favourable opportunity. He artfully represented to Charles the advantage which he would derive from visiting Spain in person: the delays of the match would be forthwith removed; the generosity of the Spaniards engaged by his confidence in their honour; and the affections of his mistress awakened by his courage and unparalleled gallantry. Having, by these arts, rendered the prince impatient for the enterprise, he succeeded in extorting from the feebleness of James a reluctant consent to a project, which so manifestly endangered the life or liberty of the heir apparent. Charles and Buckingham, accompanied by only two attendants, now proceeded on their romantic journey; and, having passed undiscovered through France, arrived in safety at Madrid. The Spaniards, charmed with the gallantry and confidence of the prince, received him with distinguished honours; and, delighted to discover in his manners a stayed, serious, dignified deportment, so congenial to their own, they beheld him with impressions daily more

favourable. But in Buckingham they saw a very different character: his gay, volatile demeanour, his unreserved familiarity with the prince, and the undisguised impetuosity of his passions, were all occasions of disgust to the Spaniards. These sentiments were fully returned by Buckingham. Insulting their customs without scruple, he had even the temerity to engage in a personal quarrel with the reigning favourite of the Spanish court; and returned to England with a decided determination to break off the match, and involve the nations in hostility. *

The preservation of peace, and the marriage of his son with a daughter of Spain, had long been the pride of James, the darling object of his cares. But Buckingham too well knew the weakness of the monarch to be deterred by these obstacles; and, assisted by the endeavours of the prince, over whom he had, during the journey, acquired an unlimited ascendancy, he obliged the reluctant king to terminate the negociations, and attempt the recovery of the Palatinate from Spain and her allies, by force of arms. But the royal coffers furnished no resources for war: the arbitrary exactions, imposed by royal authority, supplied only the immediate necessities of the court; and a parliament, however hateful, was the only resort. The cour-

* Clarendon's Hist. of the Rebellion, edit. 1720, Vol. I. p. 11 to 18.

tiers, taking their tone from Buckingham, now seemed to have forgot their tender apprehensions for the prerogative; and advised their sovereign "to cast some crumbs of his crown among the people, and those crumbs would work miracles, and satisfy many thousands." * The king, yielding to the irresistible control of his favourite, began to hold the same language; and he who had threatened and dissolved a parliament, for presuming to discuss affairs of state, now assembled them by his writs, "to advise with him in matters concerning his estate and dignity." † His speeches were conceived in a similar strain. He could not help reminding them that his condescending to ask their advice was entirely gratuitous; yet he called on them to deliberate freely on the present weighty affairs. Touching shortly, though feelingly, on his own necessities, he strongly urged them to provide adequate resources for the war; and that no suspicion might be entertained of his diverting the supplies to other purposes, he offered to commit the receipt as well as the issue to themselves. ‡

Parliament had many reasons, besides this unusual complaisance, to lend a favourable ear to the demands of their monarch. If the people had viewed the project of the Spanish match with ap-

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 115. † Ibid.
‡ Ibid. Vol. I. p. 130, 131.

prehension, their fears were increased tenfold when they saw their prince voluntarily consign himself into the hands of that suspected nation. Even should his life and freedom be spared, they trembled lest their future sovereign should fall a prey to the arts of the Catholics, and become the enemy and persecutor of their religion. The return of the prince in safety, and still a Protestant, was hailed with universal acclamations; and the public joy was raised to its height, by the announced rupture of the Spanish match, and a war for the recovery of the Palatinate. Parliament, partaking in the general exultation, proceeded to show their good will by immediately voting three subsidies and three fifteenths to be levied within a year after the declaration of war. Yet, mindful of the former proceedings of the court, they accepted the king's offer to entrust the receipt and disbursement of the supplies to a committee of their own members.* And though they expressed, in strong

* The Commons, as well as the king, seem to have regarded this as an act of extraordinary concession; yet it merely invested the committee with a power to see that the money was applied only to the purposes of the war for which it was raised. The direction of the warlike operations, as well as of the objects for which the particular disbursements were to be made, the king reserved entirely to himself; and had recourse to the committee only as his treasurers. Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 140. In this measure, we find an undesigned approximation to that expedient, so essential for the prevention of jealousies and quarrels between the sovereign and the

terms, their gratitude for his majesty's conciliating language, they ungraciously overlooked the subject of his private necessities. After the investigation of a few abuses, and the transaction of some unimportant affairs, the houses were adjourned without any symptoms of interrupted harmony. *

Conduct.

During this session, in which Buckingham bore unbounded sway, Wentworth seems to have refrained from any particular activity. Previous to the assembling of parliament, he expresses, in a letter to his brother-in-law, Lord Clifford, his slender hopes from a display of parliamentary talents, and the necessity of caution and reserve. "My opinion of these meetings your Lordship knows sufficiently well; how services done there are coldly requited on all sides, and, which is worse, many times misconstrued. I judge farther the path we are like to walk in is now more narrow and slip-

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people, the separation of the king's private expences from those of the nation. It seems strange how Mr Hume should have been led to represent this transaction as "an imprudent concession, of which the consequences might have proved fatal to royal authority." Chapter xlix. From some other expressions in the same passage, he appears to have conceived that the committee were to determine the objects to which the money should be applied, as well as to superintend its receipt and disbursement. This power is now much more completely possessed by the House of Commons, who have annually laid before them a detailed account of the national receipt and expenditure.

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 136, 147.

pery than formerly, yet not so difficult but may be passed with circumspection, patience, and, principally, silence." * From the discourses of James, as well as the delays which he interposed, Wentworth distinctly perceived the monarch's aversion to the Spanish war; and augured that he would one day seize an opportunity, to discover his resentment against those who had dragged him into hostilities. †

As yet, Wentworth looked with apparent calmness on the agitations of political ambition, and discovered a mind capable of enjoying the tranquil dignity of an independent fortune. By one of those pestilential fevers, which, from the closeness and filthiness of the streets, formerly ravaged London, he had lost his wife, and suffered much in his own constitution. A tertian ague, which succeeded the fever, and which frequently recurred during the interval between the two Parliaments, had obliged him to seek again for health in the free air and vigorous amusements of the country. Here his retirement was of considerable duration; and, in the life of a man in general so beset with care, and so anxiously devoted to the pursuit of ambition, it is pleasant to dwell on an interval of philosophic tranquillity. His letters to his friends in London discover no symptoms of a yearning ambi-

Illness and retirement to the country

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 19. † Ibid. p. 20.

tion, endeavouring to hide itself under the veil of an affected philosophy. Unconstrained and sportive, they appear the effusions of a mind which entered fully into those temperate enjoyments. To Secretary Calvert, an intimate friend and correspondent, he writes thus :—

" Matters worthy your trouble, these parts afford none, where our objects and thoughts are limited to looking on a tulip, hearing a bird sing, a rivulet murmuring, or some such petty but innocent pastime, which, for my part, I begin to feed myself in, having, I praise God, recovered more in a day by open country air, than in a fortnight's time in that smothering one of London. By my troth I wish you, divested of the importunity of business, here for half a dozen hours ; you should taste how free and fresh we breathe, and how *procul metu fruimur modestis opibus ;* a wanting sometimes denied to persons of greater eminency in the administration of commonwealths." *

In another letter to Mr Calvert, he takes occasion to say, that he had written some news of state affairs to his cousin Wandesford, who was interested in such things ; but to you, continues he, I

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 16.

have very different matters to relate; "that our harvest is all in, a most fine season to make fish-ponds, our plums all gone and past, peaches, quinces, and grapes, almost fully ripe; which will, I trow, better suit with a Thistleworth * palate, and approve how we have the skill to serve every man in his eue. These only we countrymen muse of, hoping, in such harmless retirements, for a just defence from the higher powers, and possessing ourselves in contentment, pray, with Driope in the poet,

"Et siqua est pictas, ab acutæ vulnere falcis,
Et pecoris morsu frondes defendite nostras." †

* Secretary Calvert's country seat.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 24. In his letters at this period, Wentworth occasionally amuses himself with the follies of the king and the courtiers. He informs Secretary Calvert, that he at length had news for him from the court at Rufford, whither James, who was passionately addicted to hunting, had retired to enjoy this amusement. "The loss of a stag, and the hounds hunting foxes instead of a deer, put the king your master into a marvellous chaff, accompanied with those ordinary symptoms better known to you courtiers, I conceive, than to us rural swains; in the height whereof comes a clown galloping and staring full in his face:—*His blood!* (quoth he,) *am I come forty miles to see a fellow?* and presently, in a great rage, turns about his horse, and away he goes faster than he came. This address caused his majesty and all the company to burst into a vehement laughter, and so the fume of the time was happily dispersed." Strafford's Letters, p. 23. It does no little credit to James's good humour, that he could so heartily join in the laugh at this whimsical, but very direct satire on his personal appearance.

At this, as at other periods of his life, Wentworth was strongly alive to the calls of duty. In various letters, we discover his anxious solicitude to promote the improvement of his numerous brothers, and to provide them with suitable appointments. * Of the attention and good sense with which he guided their inexperience, we have an example in his advices to his brother Michael, who had chosen the army for his profession, and was now making a campaign in Germany. After several admonitions to aim at excellence in his profession, by an assiduous employment of his time, by a diligent observation of the transactions around him, by aiding his memory with a regular journal of all remarkable incidents which contributed either to success or defeat; he endeavours to repress the ardour and indiscretion of early years. He advises him to go on with the sober, stayed courage of an understanding man, rather than with the rash and distempered heat of an unadvised youth; and warns him, that the man who ventures himself desperately, will, even by the wise, be deemed unfit for command, since he exercises none over his own unruly and misleading passions. †

March 27, 1625. From pleasures so serene, and from duties so commendable, Wentworth was called, by the incidents of a new reign, to scenes more active, and

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 14, 16, 18. † Ibid. p. 18.

transactions more questionable. The previous conduct of Charles, who now ascended the throne, had produced a very favourable impression of his character. The strictness of his morals, the reserve of his conversation, the dignity of his external deportment, were advantageously contrasted with the dissipation, the loquacity, and awkward demeanour of his father. Of the favourable disposition of the public, he had received the most indubitable indications. On his return from Spain he had been welcomed with loud and cordial demonstrations of joy; and from his participation in the rupture with that crown, and the war for the recovery of the Palatinate, he had derived new accessions of popularity. It was therefore with confidence, as far as regarded himself, that he convoked a parliament on his accession, and requested immediate supplies. But however acceptable might be the alleged occasion, (the prosecution of the war for the Palatinate,) there were certain circumstances that rendered parliament backward in their grants. In Parliament, June 18, 1625.

King James had promised that vigorous measures should be taken for asserting the rights of his son-in-law; yet nothing had been effected. A considerable army had, indeed, been raised and dispatched on board of transports; but no proper measures having been taken for their disembarkation, they were so long delayed at the ports of France and Holland, to which they sailed, that,

partly from want of provisions, partly from a contagious distemper which had crept in among men so long crowded up in narrow vessels, scarcely a third of the original number came to land; and with this slender and dispirited force, no offensive operations could be attempted. * The naval preparations of James had also been very tardy; and, instead of adventurers being enriched by captures from the Spaniards, our merchantmen, now increased in number, became too often a prey to our enemies. † "It represents unto me," says Wentworth on this occasion, "the sport of whipping the blind bear, where they lash, and that roundly too on all hands, and yet the smart and blows given so distract the poor creature, as she knows not where to take her revenge." ‡

The nation was likewise agitated by an alarm of popery. The rupture of the Spanish negociations, and a promise of James to enforce the penal laws against recusants, had at one time allayed the public apprehension, and diffused the greatest satisfaction. It was in reference to this promise that Wentworth, in a letter to a friend, dropt an expression highly expressive of the national dread of popery. "I hope in God we shall once again put

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 154.
† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 22.
‡ Wentworth to Wandesford, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 22.

a ring in the nose of that leviathan, and bend and turn him to the safety of the state, and advancement of the cause of our most just and gracious God." * Such were also the hopes of the nation; but the vanity of James soon disappointed them, and excited anew the fears for the Protestant faith. After the match with Spain was broken off, a daughter of France seemed to him the only consort worthy of his son; and negociations for this purpose were immediately commenced. The French court had viewed with fearful presages the alliance of England with the Spaniards, and received with joy an overture which promised to engage her permanently in their interests: but as James could not conceal his eagerness for the conclusion, they took advantage of his weakness to obtain their own conditions. All the invidious concessions in favour of popery, which had been claimed by the Spaniards, were now yielded to the French; and experience has shown that the apprehensions of the English nation were not groundless, when, by a fatal act of compliance, the education of the royal offspring, till their thirteenth year, was confided to their popish mother. †

These, indeed, were the transactions of James; but Charles had subscribed to all the concessions in

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 22.

† Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 152.

favour of popery, and betrayed no less eagerness for the match than his father. Its completion was the first important act of his reign; and the meeting of parliament was delayed till the young queen had been received in England. From these circumstances a suspicion arose that the court, aware of the evil eye with which this alliance was regarded, had anticipated remonstrances from parliament, and, to prevent them, had hastened the conclusion of the treaty: nor was it unforeseen that this conduct would affect the question of supplies. Wentworth, after alluding to the state of public opinion, speaks ironically of the match to his friend Calvert: "For my part I like it well, and conceive the bargain wholesome on our side, that we save three other subsidies and fifteenths. Less could not have been demanded for the dissolving of this treaty, and still the king your master have pretended to suffer loss, no doubt for our sake only, which certainly we should have believed." *

The conduct of Charles, in respect to this match, having impressed the nation with a suspicion of his attachment to popery, he found it expedient, in his first speech to parliament, to repel the allegation. †

Discontent of the nation.

Nor were there wanting other circumstances to diminish his late popularity. In retaining all the mi-

* Wentworth to Calvert, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 24.
† Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 172.

nisters of his father, he seemed to give a pledge that he would follow the same counsels; and from the resignation with which he submitted to the dictates of Buckingham, there remained no hope of a diminution of that insolent minion's authority. The popularity of the Duke, during the last session of parliament, had already vanished. It was now recollected, that, if he had brought back the prince safe, it was he who had carried him thither; that, if he had assisted to break off the Spanish match, he had zealously promoted the French; * and that many glaring abuses could be distinctly traced to his influence. If the caution with which Charles concealed his political principles, during the lifetime of his father, had bred an opinion of his prudence, it had also engendered some suspicion of his candour. And though, while prince, he had displayed no extravagance in his expences, the profusion with which, on his accession, he had scattered among those around him the remains of the treasury, rendered it doubtful how far his frugality could resist the solicitation of courtiers. †

Influenced by these circumstances, the Commons, in their first deliberations, discovered a disposition to treat of grievances as well as supplies.

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 470.

† Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, Vol. I. p. 4, 24, 25. May's History of the Parliament, p. 6, 7. edit. 1647.

As the first-fruits of their affection, however, they immediately presented his majesty with two subsidies, reserving their further liberality till some prominent abuses were investigated. * But a pestilential distemper, which extended its ravages over London, quickly interrupted their labours, and obliged the king to adjourn the session to Oxford. †

August 1, 1625. Here, after a short recess, they assembled with dispositions by no means more favourable to the views of the court. During their previous meeting, Charles had excited some disgust by opposing his prerogative to their discussions; and by prohibiting their prosecution of one Montague, his chaplain, who had written a book, which they construed into an encouragement of popery. ‡ But this cause of offence was slight, when compared to the intelligence which now transpired, that the king had enabled the French court, by the assistance of some ships, to destroy the Protestant fleet of Rochelle, and lay siege to that town, the last refuge of the Hugonots. In the ruin of these Protestants, whom Elizabeth had cherished, whom sound policy, as well as religion, seemed to call on England to support, they saw grounds for the most gloomy apprehensions; and Buckingham, whose supreme authority pointed him out as the author of these

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 173, 174. † Ibid. p. 174.
‡ Ibid.

measures, became the marked object of their displeasure. *

The Commons were now far more disposed to investigate grievances than to vote subsidies. It was in vain that the court urged the necessities of the state, and the impossibility of continuing active hostilities without farther supplies. The Commons seemed determined to inquire how their former grants had been applied; to obtain, in return for their concessions, the reform of various abuses; and to bring to light the authors of the public misfortunes. Their censures now pointed very directly at the Duke of Buckingham; when that favourite, apprehensive for his safety, induced the king to interrupt the proceedings of parliament by an abrupt dissolution. †

Wentworth in opposition.

During these transactions, Wentworth took his station among the most conspicuous patriots. No change had taken place in the measures of the new reign; there had appeared no inclination to abate the claims of the prerogative; the insolent Buckingham still distributed the favours as well as the frowns of the court. The virtuous, the moderate, the ambitious, were all equally interested to ameliorate this state of affairs. Wentworth had

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 175, 176. Whitlocke's Memorials, p. 1, 2.

† Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 191. Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 5, 25. Whitlocke, p. 2.

now reached his thirty-third year, and had attracted the attention of both parties. His connections were considerable, his talents were much respected, his vigour and decision gave him forcible claims to attention. Ready in conception, and pointed in expression, his eloquence imparted a lustre to his sentiments, and procured for his knowledge even more than adequate estimation. * His acquirements had been obtained with a method and diligence, which proved that, even in leisure and retirement, he had not lost sight of more active scenes. From his earliest youth, he had studied the graces of composition; in the most admired authors of England, of France, and of Rome, he had searched for the beauties of style; and to the popular eloquence of his age he had trained himself by a diligent attendance on the chief orators of the pulpit, the bar, and the council. When he met with an esteemed oration or tract on any subject, he deferred studying it, till he had framed a speech on the same argument: and then, from a comparison with his own essay, he endeavoured to appreciate the merits of the author, and to draw information for the correction of his own defects. †

Courted by Buckingham.

To the man thus formidable by his capacity, acquirements, and energy, Buckingham knew that

* Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 259, 260.

† Radcliffe's Essay.

he had given unprovoked offence; and daily apprehending an attack from the Commons, he judged it expedient to conciliate this opponent by expressions of esteem, and promises of future favour. These overtures were not unacceptable to Wentworth. To the request for his good offices, he replied with address and dignity, "That he honoured the duke's person, and was ready to serve him in the quality of an honest man and a gentleman." The duke replied by cordial acknowledgments; and during the short remainder of the session, Wentworth exerted himself to moderate the resentment of his party. *

These friendly appearances were of short duration. The king and his minister, amidst their fears, and their resentment at the proceedings of the last parliament, had overlooked their urgent necessities, or formed vain conceptions of their independent means of supply; for few months had elapsed when another parliament was found to be their only resource. The intervening events, however, gave no reason to hope that this assembly would prove subservient to the views of the king. For the relief of his immediate exigencies, he had compelled men to accept the title of knighthood; employed the arbitrary and partial method

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 34.

of issuing privy-seals to particular persons; * and with the money thus procured, he had equipped a fleet, from whose operations he expected farther supplies. The bay and harbour of Cadiz were full of valuable merchantmen; and the galleons, which annually conveyed to Europe the treasures of America, were about this season expected. From the rich plunder of these vessels the court formed sanguine hopes; but had the mortification to see their fleet return, disappointed in all its attempts, and with its numbers miserably reduced by a pestilential distemper. Fresh fuel was now added to the popular discontents; the disgraces as well as the losses of the nation were the theme of complaint; and Buckingham was denounced as the author of all public calamities. †

Compelled, by his necessities, to call a parliament in these unpropitious circumstances, Charles attempted some expedients to sooth and to weaken their opposition. As their suspicion of his secret attachment to popery seemed to have been the chief cause of their late alarm, he issued several proclamations for the suppression of recusants; ‡ and an ancient custom furnished him with a stratagem to exclude from the House of Commons his

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 28. Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 199.
† Rushworth, Vol. I. Clarendon, Vol. I.
‡ Rushworth, Vol. I.

most active and formidable opponents. By the feudal tenures, every one was pledged, when called on, to attend the civil as well as the military business of his sovereign; and, as a degree of honour was connected with all public appointments, the claim of the prince, thus originating, had, to the days of Charles, been acquiesced in without dispute. Among these, the office of High Sheriff, from its fatigue and expence, would often have been declined, had not the nomination of the sovereign been considered as irresistible. Besides other disadvantages, this appointment included a disability to serve in parliament; for a person could not at the same time attend to the interests of his constituents, and discharge the duties which he owed to his king as sheriff. The rule had, indeed, been occasionally dispensed with; but the monarch asserted a right to enforce its observance, and to prevent the sheriff, whom he had nominated, from neglecting his service to attend the call of his subjects. Of this custom, Charles, by the advice of Buckingham, now availed himself; and by fixing on six of the most popular leaders as sheriffs for the year, he precluded their immediate re-election to parliament. * Nov. 1625.

Wentworth heard with surprise and indignation that he was included in the number. Bucking- Appointed Sheriff.

* Rushworth, Vol. I. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 29.

ham having made his advances from fear, had regarded his friendly replies with suspicion, and having been informed that some leading men, of whom Wentworth was one, had agreed to support a prosecution against him in the next parliament, thought he should more safely trust to the inability than to the professions of his adversary. * Wentworth left no means untried to escape this unseasonable appointment. He solicited the intercession of his friends at court; but they could only remind him of the uncontrollable influence of his enemy; "that those whom he would advance were advanced; and those whom he but frowned upon were thrown down." † The duke, to conciliate the approaching parliament, by an appearance of solicitude for the recovery of the Palatinate, was now abroad on an embassy to the Low Countries; but the injunctions, which he had given before his departure, were to Charles sacred and inviolable. "I think," writes Sir Arthur Ingram to Wentworth, "if all the council that was at court had joined together in request for you, it would not have prevailed; for it was set and resolved what should be done before the great duke's going over, and from that the king would not change a tittle." ‡

Moderate resolutions.

Another expedient still remained. The disability to serve in parliament, which was supposed

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 28. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. p. 29.

to attend the office of sheriff, depended merely on a custom, which had been sometimes infringed, and often strenuously disputed. Some of his fellow-sufferers had consequently resolved to procure their re-election, and insist on their rights;* but after mature deliberation, a more moderate course seemed eligible to Wentworth. He had reason to think that he was by no means particularly obnoxious to the court. In reading over the list of sheriffs, the king had passed the rest without notice; but on naming Wentworth, he had added, "he is an honest gentleman."† He could reckon several of the ministers among his intimate friends; and it seemed most imprudent to bar the door of favour against himself for ever, by engaging in a doubtful and dangerous conflict with the crown. In the moderate course, to which these considerations moved him, he was confirmed by the counsels of Lord Clare, whose beautiful and accomplished daughter, Lady Arabella Hollis, he had lately married. His lordship, in reply to Wentworth's request for advice, highly commends his prudent resolves; expresses an apprehension that it was vain to oppose the claims of the king; and that, even should the election be found valid, the court, in revenge, would proceed to disfranchise the electors. He, indeed, heartily wishes success to those

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 30. † Ibid. p. 29.

who had the boldness to stand forward on this occasion; and that their prevailing over the trick of the courtiers might produce new security for the subject and the parliament, "and make great ones more cautious in wrestling with that high court." Yet he would not have these advantages purchased with the danger of his son-in-law; and he concludes with citing Wentworth's own words, that, in such a case, "it was much better to be a spectator than an actor." * The event justified the caution, if not the magnanimity of this conduct: the opposition attempted to the mandates of the court proved ineffectual; † and Sir Edward Coke, in the subordinate station of sheriff, was obliged to attend the circuits where he had once presided.

This invidious artifice, while it exposed the weakness of government, produced not the expected benefits. In the new parliament appeared the same spirit of independence, the same forcible oratory, the same dislike of the favourite, the same determined purpose to redress the public abuses: and the court now learnt with dismay that a favourable occasion will always call forth talent, and stimulate exertion.

Feb. 6, 1626. In the opening speech, which was delivered by

* Earl of Clare to Wentworth. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 31.
† Rushworth, Vol. I. 401.

the Lord Keeper, the Parliament were reminded of the supreme height and majesty of the monarch, the unspeakable privilege they enjoyed in being allowed to approach him, his many private virtues, and his uncommon affection to Parliaments. This love was now his only motive for calling them together; and the same sentiment made him unwilling to prolong their sitting, since their safety might again be brought into peril by a dangerous contagion. He therefore requested them to proceed without delay in framing good and wise laws, the express purpose of their convocation. That nothing might diminish the effect of this unusually gracious language, no mention was made of supplies. *

The Commons, taking this friendly exhortation in good part, proceeded to investigate such abuses as required the remedy of new laws. They now discovered that the expences of the crown had been needlessly increased; that new impositions and monopolies had been multiplied, and the regular customs enhanced by a new book of rates: that the duties of tonnage and poundage, which former princes had uniformly received from the bounty of Parliament, were now levied by the sole authority of the king; † that the late grants of

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 202, 203.

† These duties on exports and imports had been granted to each monarch only during his own life; but at the commencement of a

the Commons had been misapplied, and the honour as well as the safety of the nation compromised by shameful mismanagement. They found, that a direct and solemn promise made by the king to the last Parliament, that he would remove popish recusants from all offices of trust, had been eluded; and they were enabled to present him with a long list of such persons still occupying important stations. Other instances of dubious faith in the prince were now also brought to light. The Earl of Bristol, who had resided as ambassador in Spain, and had, by his prudence and skill, brought the match with the Infanta almost to a conclusion, when it was broken off by the intrigues of Buckingham, had witnessed all the misconduct of the favourite, and had, to prevent dangerous discoveries, been silenced and confined on his arrival in England. Being now released, he delivered an explicit account of the whole transaction, from which it too plainly appeared, that Charles, even while he interchanged the most solemn oaths of friendship with the King of Spain, had already determined to violate them; and that he had, in the

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new reign, the prince had sometimes ventured to levy them till a parliament could be summoned to grant them; and as he never pretended to do so of right, the act had passed unquestioned. The misunderstanding between Charles and his first parliament had deprived him of this grant, and he now avowedly levied the duties by his own authority.

face of Parliament, sanctioned the duke's narrative of their reception in Spain, when he knew it to be false.*

All these abuses and breaches of good faith were imputed to Buckingham. It was then, as now, the rule that ministers alone were accountable for political mismanagement; and, from the unbounded control of the duke over his sovereign, no minister was ever more justly charged with that responsibility. The Commons alleged that he had impoverished the crown by the vast gifts in money and land, which he had received for himself and his kindred; that he had accumulated into his own hands a multiplicity of high and incompatible offices; that, in deference to his father and mother-in-law, who were avowed Catholics, he had connived at the indulgence of recusants; that, through him, honours, offices, places of judicature, and ecclesiastical promotions, had been scandalously set to sale; and that, in his united capacity of admiral and general, he had left the narrow seas unguarded, delivered over vessels to assist the French court against the Protestants of Rochelle, and, by his criminal negligence and imprudence, given rise to disasters both by sea and land. These accusations they proceeded to prove in an impeachment before the House of Lords.†

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 207, 208, 238, 256.

† Ibid. p. 214, 217, 303, et seq.

The king and the favourite looked with dread on these proceedings, which they had neither the resolution to await, nor the address to elude. As soon as direct charges began to be advanced in the House of Commons against the duke, Charles, laying aside his former conciliatory language, resolved to accelerate their grants by peremptory demands, and to repress their accusations by menaces. Overlooking the right of impeachment, which the Commons had acted on, unchallenged, both in the last and the preceding reigns, he told them that he would not allow them to call in question even his meanest servant, far less his chosen minister; he threatened to avenge himself of those members who presumed to speak disrespectfully of the duke; and commanded them, as they wished to avoid worse consequences, without delay to declare the exact amount of the supplies which they were willing to grant. *

The Commons, to show that it was not their object to distress the king, voted him three fifteenths and three subsidies, to which they afterwards added a fourth; but, convinced both from former experience, and the present disposition of the court, that this was the only hold which they had on its forbearance, they deferred passing the vote into a law, till their grievances should first be preferred

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 214, 215, 216, 217.

and answered.* At the same time, disregarding the menaces of the court, they proceeded to investigate the misconduct of Buckingham.†

Charles now resolved to increase the vigour of his language. He told the Commons, that he would suffer no violation of his royal rights, under colour of parliamentary liberty; that he would permit no inquiry into the conduct of his meanest servant; and that he considered their charges against the duke as attacks on his own honour. He expressed his displeasure at the scantiness of the supplies, and still more at the condition with which they were accompanied, and fixed a precise day, by which he commanded them to state, directly and finally, the amount of unconditional supplies which they purposed to grant. To make them aware that he had still more decisive measures in agitation, he added, "remember that parliaments are altogether in my power for their calling, sitting, and dissolution; therefore, as I find the fruits of them good or evil, they are to continue, or not to be."‡

But the resolution of Charles was unequal to the boldness of his language. Hearing that his speech had excited high indignation among the Commons, he sent Buckingham to explain away

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 221, 409. † Ibid. p. 221.
‡ Ibid. p. 222, 223, 224, 225.

the offensive expressions, and to retract his peremptory demand of supplies by a precise day. * He afterwards, without expressing any resentment, received a remonstrance, in which they asserted, "that it hath been the ancient, constant, and undoubted right and usage of parliaments, to question and complain of all persons, of what degree soever, found grievous to the commonwealth, in abusing the power and trust committed to them by their sovereign." † So far from impeding their impeachment of the duke, Charles now, by a special message, permitted them to introduce what new matter they pleased into the charges which they had exhibited against him. ‡

Yet the prosecution was hardly commenced, when the alarm of the favourite and the violent resolves of the king returned. Two of the most active managers of the impeachment were sent to the Tower; § and Sir Dudley Carlton, the vice-chamberlain, renewed, still more explicitly, the king's former threats. "I beseech you, gentlemen," said he, "move not his majesty by trenching on his prerogatives, lest you bring him out of love with parliaments. You have heard his majesty's frequent messages to you, to put you forward in a course that will be most convenient. In

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 226.
† Ibid. p. 245.
‡ Ibid. p. 248.
§ Ibid. p. 356.

those messages he told you, that, if there were not correspondency between him and you, he should be enforced to use *new counsels*. Now, I pray you, consider what these new counsels are, and may be: I fear to declare those that I conceive. In all Christian kingdoms, you know that parliaments were in use anciently, by which they were governed in a most flourishing manner, until the monarchs began to know their own strength; and seeing the turbulent spirit of their parliaments, they at length, by little and little, began to stand upon their own prerogatives, and at last overthrew the parliaments throughout Christendom, except here only with us. And, indeed, you would count it a great misery, if you knew the subject in foreign countries as well as myself; to see them look, not like our nation, with store of flesh on their backs, but like so many ghosts, and not men; being nothing but skin and bones, with some thin cover to their nakedness, and wearing only wooden shoes on their feet; so that they cannot eat meat, or wear good clothes, but they must pay taxes to the king for it. This is a misery beyond expression, and that which yet we are free from. Let us be careful, then, to preserve the king's good opinion of parliaments, which bring this happiness to this nation, and make us envied of all others, while there is this sweetness between his majesty and his

Commons, lest we lose the repute of a free born nation, by turbulency in parliament." *

The Commons had just reason to be alarmed at this discourse, which so plainly intimated that the national freedom could be retained only by their unlimited compliance; that the king, rather than have his will disputed, would, like the other absolute princes of Europe, overturn the ancient constitution of his country, and reduce his people, from a flourishing condition, to the lowest ebb of wretchedness. But their indignation was further aggravated, when they saw the Duke of Buckingham, in contempt of their impeachment, ostentatiously invested with new dignities. The Chancellorship of the University of Cambridge having become vacant, the king signified his pleasure that Buckingham should be elected to this station of honour. The majority of the members yielded obedience; and the king, in a public letter of thanks to the University, assured them that he considered an honour conferred on the duke as an obligation to himself. †

It was in vain that the king now addressed the indignant Commons, again commanding them to expedite the bill of supplies by a certain day, and threatening that he would otherwise have recourse to other resolutions. They replied by a humble

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 359. † Ibid. p. 371, 374.

petition for the removal of Buckingham from access to the royal presence; and proceeded, in temperate and respectful language, to draw up a more detailed remonstrance to the same effect, in which they also protested against the illegal levying of tonnage and poundage: when the king, alarmed and angry, suddenly put an end to their labours by a dissolution. *

Wentworth's conduct as Sheriff.

During this eventful contest, Wentworth continued, at a distance from the scene, calmly and diligently executing the duties of his office. Although he had undertaken them with reluctance, he was determined to discharge them with fidelity; and, in the true spirit of a philosopher, he says, "I will withall closely and quietly attend my own private fortune, repairing and settling it with innocent hands, moderate and regulated desires, and so repose myself on the goodness of the Almighty, that doth not only divert the scourges of an adversary, but doth even convert them into health and soundness. Can there be a fairer or fuller revenge? *Insanos feri tumultus ridere.* Is there any state or condition so safe, more to be recommended? *Virtus vitae tacitos beatae, rure secreto, sibi nota tandum, exigit annos.* Yet I do lament, sadly lament, the miseries of these times, being reduced to such a prostration of spirit, as we are nei-

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 397, 404, 405.

ther able to overcome the exulcerated disease, nor to endure a sharp prevalent remedy." *

Philosophic resolutions.

To the last subject, which now alone seemed to interrupt his philosophic tranquillity, he again adverts, and heartily offers his prayers for the success of the oppositionists, since he was now precluded from rendering them other assistance. "For my own part, I will commit them to their active heat,

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and, according to the season of the year, fold myself up in a cold silent forbearance, apply myself cheerfully to the duties of my place, and heartily pray to God to bless Sir Francis Seymour. † For my rule, which I will not transgress, is, never to contend with the prerogative out of a parliament; nor yet to contest with a king but when I am constrained thereunto, or else make shipwreck of my integrity and peace of conscience, which I trust God will ever bless me with, and with courage too to preserve it." ‡

New overtures from Buckingham.

While pursuing these resolutions, so prudent amidst the distraction of the times, Wentworth received new overtures from Buckingham. Alarmed at the accusations preparing in parliament, and fearful of the general indignation, the favourite

* Wentworth to Wandesford, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 32.

† One of the members nominated sheriffs, who was now, in defiance of the displeasure of the crown, attempting to procure his re-election. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 30.

‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 33.

deemed it high time to conciliate some of those angry spirits whom his former insolence had exasperated. To Wentworth, whose vigour and influence were objects of dread, he forgot not to apply his arts; and, having called him to a personal interview, assured him that his nomination as sheriff had taken place without his knowledge, and during his absence; and begged that all former misunderstandings should be buried in a contract of permanent friendship. The protestations of the duke were evidently false, his proffers of amity probably insincere; yet his necessity for the support of able men, under his present load of public reproach, opened a door to preferment, opportune and apparently certain. Wentworth, therefore, met these advances with cordiality; and having again waited on the duke, and experienced the most obliging reception, he departed, in full satisfaction, for Yorkshire, to await, amidst his private and official avocations, the result of these favourable appearances. *

Deprived of his office as Custos Rotulorum.

But the impetuosity and rashness of Buckingham set all calculations at defiance. Whether moved by the representations of some interested intriguer; or confirmed in his confident schemes by the respite which he enjoyed after the dissolution of parliament; he was accessary to a step which gave a

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 34, 35.

new edge to the enmity of Wentworth. The office of Custos Rotulorum, though of little emolument, was attended with considerable honour; and as Wentworth had been permitted to enjoy it when out of favour at court, he had no reason to doubt of its security after his reconciliation with Buckingham. It was with no small surprise that he now received his majesty's order to resign the office to his old antagonist Sir John Savile; and still more was his resentment roused, when the warrant was presented to him before a full meeting of the county, at which, in his quality of high sheriff, he presided. He addressed the lords and gentlemen around him: he pointedly remarked that "this was a place ill chosen, a stage ill prepared, for venting such poor, vain, insulting humour." He declared himself ready to prove, at the price of his life, that he had never declined from the plain and open ways of loyalty, that he had never falsified the precious and general trust of his county, that he had never injured or overborne the meanest individual under the disguised mask of justice and favour. A little flattery and compliance at court would, he added, have rendered him secure. "The world," said he, "may well think I know the way which would have kept my place. I confess, indeed, it had been too dear a purchase, so I leave it, not conscious of any fault in myself, nor

yet acquainted with any virtue in my successor, that should occasion this removal." *

Yet Wentworth, though he vigorously repelled this public affront, did not allow his passion to silence the voice of discretion. He took precautions that this unexpected mortification should not prejudice him with the prince, whom he might hope hereafter to serve in a superior capacity. An intimacy, which he had formed with Sir Richard Weston, Chancellor of the Exchequer, furnished him with the means of executing these intentions. This man had improved the advantages of birth and fortune, which he derived from his ancestors, by a good education, and a sagacious observation of men. Having devoted his exertions to obtain preferment at court, he spent the last part of a fair estate in acquiring the acquaintance and favour of the great men in authority; and had his attendance at length rewarded by an appointment to several embassies abroad. In these he displayed a diligence and address which soon procured him the rank of a privy counsellor, and the place of Chancellor of the Exchequer. The court was by no means popular, his patron Buckingham was pursued by a general odium, and himself, from the avowed tenets of his family, suspected of an attach-

Private advances to the king.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 36.

ment to popery.* Yet, by carefully avoiding every occasion of offence, he had the rare good fortune to be acceptable to the court, and yet not displeasing to parliament.† With Wentworth he had formed a peculiar intimacy; had laboured to accommodate his differences with the duke; and had been present at their several interviews for reconciliation.

To this friend, Wentworth now represented, by letter, the injustice which he had sustained; reminded him of the several advances of the duke; and called on him to witness that every new breach had proceeded from a new provocation on the part of his grace. "At the dissolved parliament in Oxford," said he, "you are privy how I was moved from and in behalf of the Duke of Buckingham, with promise of his good esteem and favour; you are privy that my answer was, 'I did honour the duke's person, that I would be ready to serve him in the quality of an honest man and a gentleman:' you are privy that the duke took this in good part, and sent me thanks, as for respects done him; you are privy how, during that sitting, (session,) I performed what I had professed. The

* We find it afterwards the general opinion that Weston died a Papist. None but persons of that persuasion were present at his death. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 389.

† Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 48, 49.

consequence of all this was, the making me sheriff the next winter after. It is true the duke, a little before Whitsuntide last, at Whitehall, in your presence, said it was done without his grace's knowledge; that he was then in Holland. At Whitehall, Easter term last, you brought me to the duke; his grace did before you contract (as he pleased to term it) a friendship with me, all former mistakes laid aside, forgotten. After, I went at my coming out of town, to receive his commands, to kiss his grace's hands, where I had all the good words and good usage which could be expected, which bred in me a great deal of content, a full security. Now the consequence here again is, that even yesterday I received his majesty's writ, for the discharging me of the poor place of Custos Rotulorum, which I held here. His good pleasure shall be cheerfully obeyed; yet I cannot but observe, that the reward of my long, painful, and loyal service to his majesty in that place, is thus to be cast off, without any fault laid to my charge that I hear of; and that his grace too was now in England. I have therefore troubled you with this unartificial relation, to show you the singleness of my heart, resting in all assurance justly confident, you shall never find that I have, for my own part, in a tittle transgressed from what hath passed betwixt us." *

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 34, 35.

This letter Wentworth followed up by another, in which he solicits his friend, at some favourable opportunity, to represent to his majesty the estimation in which he was held by the late king, his ardent attachment to his present sovereign, his unfeigned grief at the apprehension of his displeasure, and his eager desire to show his affection and zeal by future services.—"Calling to mind the faithful service I had the honour to do to his majesty now with God, how graciously he vouchsafed to accept and express it openly sundry times, I enjoy with myself much comfort and contentment. On the other side, though in my breast still strongly dwell entire intentions, and by God's goodness shall to my grave, towards his sacred majesty that now is, yet I well may apprehend the weight of his indignation, being put out of all commissions wherein I had formerly served and been trusted. This makes me sensible of my misfortune, though not conscious of any inward guilt that might occasion it; resting infinitely ambitious, not of any new employment, but much rather to live under the smile than the frown of my sovereign. In this streight, therefore, give me leave to recommend to you the protection of my innocence, and to beseech you, at some good opportunity, to represent unto his majesty my tender and unfeigned grief for his disfavour: my fears also that I stand, before his justice and goodness, clad in the malevo-

lent interpretations, and prejudiced by the subtle insinuations of my adversaries: and lastly, my only and humble suit, that his majesty would princely deign, that my insufficiency or fault may be shown me; to this only end, that, if insufficiency, I may know where and how to improve myself, and be better enabled to present hereafter more ripe and pleasing fruits of my labours in his service: if a fault, that I may either confess my error, and beg his pardon; or else, which I am most confident I shall do, approve myself throughout an honest and well-affected loyal subject, with full, plain, and upright satisfaction to all that can, by the greatest malice, or undisguised truth, be objected against me." *

The friends who were acquainted with this respectful submission of Wentworth were not a little surprised when they saw him, not many months after, boldly stand forward as the assertor of popular rights, and the opponent of the crown, in its most favourite exertions of power. But this conduct, though to them it might bear the aspect of imprudence and temerity, was dictated by a profound appreciation of the intervening circumstances.

Charles, having dissolved the Parliament, hastened to show that his threats of resorting to new

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 35.

counsels were not empty words, and that, according to the explicit menace of the vice-chamberlain, he was resolved, after the example of other European kings, to extinguish the importunate privileges of Parliament. The most urgent task was to provide money for the exigencies of the state, and various expedients were without delay put in force. The privy-council issued an order that all those duties of tonnage and poundage on exports and imports, which had hitherto required a grant from Parliament, should now be paid on a demand from the king.* The Commons, we have seen, had resolved, if not prevented by a dissolution, to grant four subsidies and three fifteenths; this money it was resolved to levy partly by privy seals, and partly in the form of a benevolence; the people being called on to consider the contribution as "merely a free gift from the subject to the sovereign."† Popish recusants had hitherto been subjected to heavy penalties and legal disabilities: these were now compounded for a fine to the exchequer.‡ The nobility were requested, by particular messages from the king, to set an example to the rest of his subjects, by the liberality of their contributions.§ As the submission of the city of London was also a precedent of much

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 413. † Ibid. p. 416.
‡ Ibid. p. 413, 414. § Ibid. p. 415.

importance, it was commanded to advance his majesty a loan of a hundred thousand pounds; and when the magistrates endeavoured to excuse themselves from this partial imposition, they were desired to comply without delay, or to abide the consequences of those counsels which it became a king to frame on extreme and important occasions. * To equip a fleet with the least trouble and delay, each sea-port was commanded to furnish a certain number of ships, specified by the privy-council; and, with the assistance of the neighbouring counties, to furnish them with men, arms, ammunition, and all manner of sea stores. And when some ports, alarmed at this novel and arbitrary imposition, endeavoured to avert it by petitions, they were informed, "that state occasions are not to be guided by ordinary precedents;" and warned not to obstruct the demand "by petitions and pleadings, which tend to the danger of the commonwealth, and are not to be received." †

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* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 415.

† Ibid. p. 415. Mr Hume (Vol. VI. p. 225, 8vo edit.) represents this as "a taxation once imposed by Elizabeth:" but nothing could be more unlike than the two cases. When the mighty preparations for the Armada were announced, all ranks of men in England, alarmed for whatever they held dear, hastened to offer their persons and property for the defence of their country. Many noblemen and gentlemen, at their own private expence, equipped vessels and served on board of them in person; and the maritime towns vied with each other in furnishing ships for the public ser-

While the minds of men were thrown into a ferment by these circumstances, the irregular exactions imposed by royal authority were too slowly extorted from an unwilling people, to answer the exigencies of the government. Charles, therefore, boldly ventured to impose, by his own mandates, those general and regular contributions, which parliament alone had, for ages, been accounted competent to bestow.* By a royal decree, he

The court demands a general loan.

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vice. It was at this juncture that Elizabeth, by an order of the privy-council, regulated the number of vessels which it would be requisite for each sea-port to furnish towards the common defence: but so far did the zeal of the people outrun even the apprehended necessities of government, that several sea-ports, and, among the rest, London, sent double the number of vessels which the queen had specified. But when this contribution in kind was required by Charles, no such emergency existed: instead of regulating the overflowing liberality of his subjects, he obtained his supplies by compulsion: and both the court and people looked on the imposition as a method of supplying the wants of government, without having recourse to the ancient forms of the constitution.

* It must strike every reader, on perusing the original records of that period, that neither Charles nor his courtiers denied that these arbitrary impositions were infringements of the popular rights. Even while enforcing the measure here alluded to, Charles thought it expedient to soothe the minds of men by a declaration, stating, "that the urgency of the occasion would not give leave to the calling of a parliament; but assuring the people, that this way should not be made a precedent for the time to come, to charge them or their posterity, to the prejudice of their *just and ancient liberties enjoyed under his most noble ancestors.*" Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 418. Charles and his courtiers considered these measures as a part of his *new counsels*; to defend them on the ground of precedent, was the attempt of a later age.

commanded a general contribution to be levied over all the kingdom. It bore the less invidious name of a loan; but that no one might be ignorant of its real nature and intention, the assessment was ordered to be made according to the forms and proportion of a subsidy.* Could the people be brought to give peaceably one subsidy without the intervention of parliament, habit, it was thought, would soon reconcile them to the new system, and free the crown from its trammels for ever. Strenuous precautions were taken to ensure the success of the measure: commissioners sworn to secrecy were instructed in the art of mingling authority with example, and persuasion with menace: neither excuse nor remonstrance were to be admitted, nor was resistance to be allowed to gain strength from delay and reflection.†

These proceedings spread universal consternation among all ranks of men. They saw the only bond by which they held their ancient liberties about to be rent asunder, and their boasted constitution assimilated to the other absolute governments of Europe.‡ The spirit of resistance dif-

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* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 418. † Ibid. p. 418, 419.

‡ The following extract from Archbishop Abbot's Narrative strongly represents the general sentiments at that period: "For the matter of the loan, I knew not a long time what to make of it. I saw, on the one side, the king's necessity for money, and especially it being resolved that the war should be pursued; and on

fused itself throughout every condition; and the loan was refused by needy mechanics as well as by men distinguished for their rank and fortune.

Dissuaded by his friends.

With these opposers of the court, his friends, with grief and surprise, saw Wentworth take a decided part. They conjured him to abandon a resolution by which he would forfeit all pretensions to discretion: they represented the dangers which his health would incur from the rigours of a prison, and the ruin which must overwhelm all his ambi-

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the other side I could not forget, that in the parliament great sums were offered, if the petitions of the Commons might be hearkened unto. It ran still in my mind, that *the old and usual way was best;* that, in kingdoms, the harmony was sweetest where the prince and the people tuned well together. It ran in my mind, that this *new device* for money could not long hold out; that then we must return into the highway, whither it were best to retire ourselves betimes, the shortest errors being the best. At the opening of the commission for the loan, I was sent for from Croydon. It seemed to me *a strange thing;* but I was told, that, howsoever it showed, the king would have it so, there was no speaking against it. I have not heard, that men throughout the kingdom should lend money against their will; I knew not what to make of it. But when I saw the instructions, that the refusers should be sent away for soldiers to the King of Denmark, I began to remember Urias, that was set in the fore-front of the battle; and, to speak truth, I durst not be tender in it. And when afterwards I saw that men were to be put to their oath, with whom they had conference, and whether any did dissuade them, and yet further beheld that divers were to be imprisoned, *I thought this was somewhat a new world.*" See the Archbishop's Narrative in Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 455.

tious hopes.* He deceived himself, they said, if he considered this resistance as revenging his quarrel on the duke; that his majesty had adopted the measure as peculiarly his own; that Buckingham, alarmed at the general discontent, had even endeavoured to dissuade him from persevering in it, but had the mortification to receive an absolute denial; for, said the king, "my honour is engaged, and the eyes of the kingdom are upon me." † They informed him that his majesty had, on this occasion, avowedly taken the punishment of the refractory into his own hands. "No one," said his brother-in-law, Lord Clifford, "will henceforth venture to move the king in your favour; for his heart is so inflamed in this business, that he vows a perpetual remembrance, as well as a present punishment." ‡

Reasons for his conduct.

But the resistance of Wentworth was prompted by very substantial reasons. If he had a spark of patriotism or generosity in his bosom, this was the season to stand forth in defence of the expiring liberties of his country: and even if ambition were, as his friends seem to have imagined, the predominant principle of his mind, the course which he pursued was conformable to the most deliberate dictates of reflection. Buckingham, he

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 37, 38, 39.
† Ibid. p. 38. ‡ Ibid.

knew, had long cherished animosity towards him;* and, from the character of his Grace, he had no reason to expect any disinterested patronage. Yet, by the force of his parliamentary eloquence, he had extorted from the fears of the minister what he could never have obtained from his liberality; he had compelled him to make repeated advances, and at least to counterfeit the appearances of friendship. But if the new system of raising supplies should pass into an established practice; if parliaments, rendered unnecessary, should cease to be assembled, no scope would be afforded for the display of talent, no means left for awing the insolent favourite. No longer trembling under the terrors of an impeachment, Buckingham would continue with impunity to wound his opponents, and to lavish the offices and honours of the state among his own creatures.

Imprisoned May 1627.

Whether animated by patriotism, or prompted by ambition, Wentworth refused to pay the demanded contribution; and having, before the privy-council, persisted in justifying his conduct, he was first thrown into prison, and afterwards, as a mitigated punishment, sent to Dartford in Kent,

* So unacceptable was Wentworth at this time to Buckingham, that even an intimacy with him was sometimes prejudicial to his friends. Archbishop Abbot mentions, among the causes of his sequestration, the displeasure of the duke at his intercourse with Wentworth. See his Narrative in Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 451.

where he was prohibited from going above two miles from the town. *

This restraint was not of long continuance. The resistance of the people increased with the necessities of the crown; and Charles, if he had the resolution, found he wanted the power, to give efficacy to his new counsels. The proposed system of government, difficult under any circumstances, was impracticable under the course which he pursued. Injudicious innovations, from the ruling party in the church, excited general discontent. †

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* Radcliffe's Essay. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 39.

† Dr Sibthorp and Dr Manwaring, in their pulpit orations fo the advancement of the loan. The former preached a sermon, entitled *Apostolical Obedience.* It was dedicated to the king, and licensed by Laud, Bishop of London; for the Archbishop of Canterbury, having refused to give it this sanction, fell under the high displeasure of the court, and was sequestered from his functions. Among other doctrines to the same purport, Sibthorp here maintained, that, "if princes command any thing which subjects may not perform, because it is against the laws of God, or of nature, or impossible; yet subjects are bound to undergo the punishment, without either resisting, or railing, or reviling, and so to yield a passive obedience where they cannot exhibit an active one. I know no other case," continued he, "but one of those three, wherein a subject may excuse himself with passive obedience." Dr Manwaring, in sermons preached before the king and court at Whitehall, asserted, "that the king is not bound to observe the laws of the realm concerning the subject's rights and liberties, but that his royal will and command in imposing loans and taxes, without common consent in parliament, doth oblige the subject's conscience, upon pain of eternal damnation. That those who refused to pay

A proclamation by the king, prohibiting the promulgation of any but orthodox doctrines, was construed into a discouragement of the creed of Luther, and a recommendation of that of Arminius.* The primate of England, venerable for his years and moderation, was sequestered, by a royal man-

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this loan offended against the law of God, and the king's supreme authority, and became guilty of impiety, disloyalty, and rebellion. That the authority of parliament is not necessary for the raising of aids and subsidies; and that the slow proceedings of such great assemblies were not fitted for the supply of the state's urgent necessities, but would rather produce sundry impediments to the just designs of princes." Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 422, 423. Mr Hume, in alluding to these sermons, observes, that "there is nothing which tends more to excuse, if not justify, the extreme rigour of the Commons towards Charles, than his open avowal and encouragement of such general principles as were altogether incompatible with a limited government."

* The prelates most devoted to the court had adopted the tenets, with respect to predestination and certain other points of theology, which had been propagated by Arminius; and these, however rational, were a novelty in the church of England, which, along with other Protestant countries, had, at the Reformation, embraced the doctrine of Luther and Calvin. To that doctrine the great body of the nation, and, among the rest, the puritans, still firmly adhered; and the contentions between the supporters of the old, and the propagators of the new doctrines, divided private societies, and resounded from the pulpit. The puritans (under which title the court comprised almost all assertors of civil or religious liberty) were farther alarmed, when they saw Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, and Lord Keeper of England, removed from his office, and prosecuted in the Star Chamber, because he would not concur in an odious persecution against them. Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 412, 413, 421.

date, from his authority, because he refused his sanction to discourses recommending passive obedience. Judges who refused to pervert justice were displaced for the obsequious creatures of the crown; and decisions contrary to positive law were given against those who resisted arbitrary exactions. Men whose rank and fortune commanded respect were indeed only commited to prison, without benefit of the Habeas Corpus Act, or consigned to counties remote from their properties; but this lenity was attributed to fear, and not to a sense of justice, when the refractory among the lower orders were, without regard to their destitute families, impressed, some into the navy, others into the land forces. * Various districts were put under martial law: and bands of soldiers were dispersed over the country, and arbitrarily quartered on the inhabitants. †

Amidst the general ferment thus excited, the public were surprised to see the court plunge itself into another unprovoked war. The Duke of Buckingham having, during an embassy to France, been thwarted in an unjustifiable affair of gallantry, determined to revenge his disappointment by open hostilities; ‡ and Charles had the weakness to con-

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 422.

† Ibid. p. 419, 420. Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, Vol. I. p. 41.

‡ Ibid. p 38.

cur in the insolent fury of the favourite. The French servants of the young queen were dismissed,* herself treated with disrespect,† and when the court of France still expressed its indignation only by remonstrances, Buckingham took effectual means to give activity to its resentment, by causing some ships of that nation to be seized and carried into English ports. The duke having now resolved to show his prowess by undertaking an expedition in person, the treasury was drained, and large debts incurred, to furnish him with a suitable armament. His object was the relief of Rochelle, which he had so lately assisted to reduce; but so ill were his measures concerted, that he found it necessary to disembark on the adjacent Isle of Rhé. Here, having suffered his army to be baffled

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* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 424.

† The resignation with which Charles bore the insults and caprices of a man who had once threatened to strike him, and usually treated him with a very rude familiarity, might be ascribed to a disposition too mild to take offence, or too lenient to resent indignities. But we can scarcely reconcile to generosity or to manhood the rudeness with which he suffered this minion to treat his young and beautiful queen. One day, when Buckingham unjustly apprehended that she had shown some disrespect to his mother, in not going to her house at an appointed hour, a visit which was prevented by mere accident, he came into her chamber in much passion, and, after some rude expostulations, told her, "*she should repent it.*" When her majesty answered with some spirit, he insolently replied, "*that there had been queens in England who had lost their heads.*" Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 39.

by an inferior enemy, and to be at length overtaken in a situation where valour was of no avail, he narrowly escaped in the rout which followed, and hastening on board the ships, left his men to follow their general as they could. *

From one end of the kingdom to the other, the news of this overthrow spread grief and consternation. In the confusion of the rout, numbers of all ranks had been crushed to death, or drowned without the agency of an enemy. Scarcely a noble family but had to lament the death of a son, a brother, or a kinsman; nor was their grief allayed by the consolation, that their relatives had fallen by honourable wounds. The fleet and the army broke out into mutinies; and the government, overwhelmed with its difficulties, was unable to pay their arrears. †

In this desperate condition, the court saw no alternative but to lay aside, for the present, its new

* The account given by Mr Hume of Buckingham's conduct on this occasion is different. He states that the duke "was the last of the army that embarked," and that he brought back with him to England at least "the vulgar praise of courage and personal bravery." Clarendon, who was a great admirer of his grace, also celebrates his courage on this occasion. The account given in the text is taken from a letter of the Honourable Denzil Hollis, afterwards Lord Hollis, to his brother-in-law, Wentworth, and inserted in Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 42. Hollis says he had his information from officers of rank who served in the expedition.

† Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 40, 41. Rushworth, Vol. I. 425.

Released. counsels, so inauspiciously begun, and to resume the old course till a more favourable opportunity. By the advice of Sir Robert Cotton, a member of the privy-council, writs were issued for a new par-
January 1628. liament; and the severities, hitherto practised against the popular party, were superseded by gracious attempts at conciliation.* To break the tide of indignation, which now flowed against Buckingham, this happy change was publicly ascribed to his advice and earnest intercession with the king.† The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Lincoln, the Earl of Bristol, so lately the objects of punishment, were now summoned, with other peers of their rank, to resume their seats in the parliament and the council.‡ The gentlemen who remained confined to prisons and distant counties, for refusing the general loan, were now freed from restraint; and were immediately returned by the people to the House of Commons, as the most strenuous assertors of their liberties.§ Among the rest, Wentworth, liberated from his confinement at Dartford, was triumphantly re-elected for the county of York.||

In Parliament, 1628. But these conciliatory measures formed only part of a plan, of which the grand characteristics were menace and terror. Seven days after the

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 472. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. p. 474.
§ Ibid. p. 472. || Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 46.

writs for this assembly were issued, all the principal officers of the crown were, by a commission under the great seal, authorized and commanded to devise the best and speediest means of raising supplies for the exigencies of the state: and in this instrument they were reminded, that "form and circumstance must be dispensed with, rather than the substance be lost and hazarded." * The address of the king to the houses was in perfect correspondence with this language. Without mentioning their grievances, or holding out any hope of redress, he shortly told them, "That common danger was the cause of this parliament, and supply the chief end of it: wherefore," said he, "if you should not do your duties, in contributing what the state at this time needs, I must, in discharge of my conscience, use those other means, which God hath put into my hands, to save that, which the follies of particular men may otherwise hazard to lose. Take not this as a threat," continued his majesty, "for I scorn to threaten any but my equals; but as an admonition from him that, both out of nature and duty, hath most care of your preservation and prosperity." † The Lord Keeper, enlarging, by his majesty's direction, on the same topics, was yet more explicit. "This way," said he, "of parliamentary supplies, his ma-

March 17, 1628.

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 474, 614. † Ibid. p. 476, 477.

jesty hath chosen, as he told you, not as the only way, but as the fittest; not as destitute of others, but as most agreeable to the goodness of his own most gracious disposition, and to the desire and weal of his people. If this be deferred, necessity and the sword of the enemy make way for the others. Remember his majesty's admonition," added he emphatically, "I say, remember it." *

To provide against counsels so undisguisedly displayed, the Commons proceeded with the greatest temper and firmness. Too dignified to be moved by fear, and too independent to be swayed by the hopes of favour, they comprised the persons most distinguished in the nation for talents and influence; and their collective property was computed to be equal to three times that of the House of Peers. The grievances of which they had to complain, and which were neither chimerical nor longer supportable, gave rise to many energetic and eloquent harangues; and Wentworth, among others, maintained that these arbitrary measures, the baneful effects of evil counsellors, were alike pernicious to the sovereign and the subject.

Speech for popul rights.

"Surely," said he, "these illegal ways are punishments and marks of indignation. The raising of loans strengthened by commission, with unheard-of instructions and oaths, the billetting of soldiers

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 479.

by the lieutenants and their deputies, have been as if they could have persuaded mankind, that the right of empires had been to take away by strong hands; and they have endeavoured, as far as possible for them, to do it. This hath not been done by the king, (under the pleasing shade of whose crown I hope we shall ever gather the fruits of justice,) but by projectors who have extended the prerogative of the king beyond the just symmetry, which maketh a sweet harmony of the whole. They have brought the crown into greater want than ever by anticipating the revenues; they have introduced a privy-council, ravishing, at once, the spheres of all ancient government; destroying all liberty; imprisoning us without bail or bond. They have taken from us—what shall I say? Indeed, what have they left us? By tearing up the roots of all property, they have taken from us every means of supplying the king, and of ingratiating ourselves by voluntary proofs of our duty and attachment.

"To the making whole all these breaches, I shall apply myself; and to all these diseases, shall propound a remedy. By one and the same thing have the people been hurt, and by the same must they be cured. We must vindicate—what? new things? No!—*our ancient, legal, and vital liberties;* by reinforcing the laws enacted by our ancestors; by setting such a seal on them as no licentious spirit shall hereafter dare to infringe. And

shall we fear, by this proceeding, to put an end to parliament? No; our desires are modest and just, and equally for the interest of the king and the people. If we enjoy not these rights, it will be impossible for us to relieve him." *

Amidst these discussions, the king having sent to the Commons some specific propositions for supply, it was debated whether they or the redress of grievances should first be taken into consideration. † Wentworth strongly pressed that their grants should be preceded by redress. "I cannot," said he, "forget that duty I owe to my country: unless we be secured in our liberties, we cannot give." ‡ Yet after a short delay, the house, at the instance especially of Mr Pym, unanimously voted a supply of five subsidies to his majesty. §

When informed of this unexpected liberality, Charles was sensibly affected. ‖ He had accustomed himself to look on the Commons as the inveterate enemies of his power, as a clog on the motions of his government. Yet amidst the loudest complaints of arbitrary measures, and their most bitter invectives against his obnoxious ministers, they had uniformly spoken of himself, not only with respect and loyalty, but with affection and esteem;

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* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 500. Franklyn, p. 343.
† Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 513. ‡ Ibid. p. 521.
§ Ibid. p. 525. ‖ Ibid.

and, though exasperated by his menaces, they had now hastened to remove those necessities which all his own authority had failed to relieve. When the gracious reception which he gave to this instance of their duty was reported to them, they showed a jealousy of his honour beyond all his servile courtiers; and expressed their disappointment that the thanks of the Duke of Buckingham should be coupled with the approbation of their sovereign. *

Prompts the Petition of Right.

All those arbitrary invasions of persons and property, which now excited complaint, were expressly guarded against by many ancient statutes, never repealed, though often infringed by tyrannical monarchs. The Commons resolved, therefore, merely to draw up a declaration reciting the substance of those existing laws, and hence denominated a Petition of Right. By procuring his majesty's explicit sanction to such a declaration, they would both point out to him the determinate constitutional limits of his authority; and secure his observance of them for the future, if any laws were to be binding, or any faith placed in the word of a king.

At these resolutions, which opposed fresh barriers to his new plan of government, Charles was alarmed. The statutes recounted in this Petition of Right had been enacted at distant periods; and

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 526.

though never deemed obsolete, yet recent practice might be successfully opposed to antiquated records. If he gave an express sanction to these claims of the subject, all the advantage, which he derived from their distant origin would be annihilated: nor could he afterwards impose any arbitrary exaction, or punish the refractory, without incurring the charge of a direct violation of faith. As it was inconvenient, however, to interrupt the proceedings of the Commons by a prorogation or dissolution, since the vote for five subsidies had not yet passed into a law; he endeavoured to divert their attention by urging the necessity of instant supplies, by threatening a speedy termination to the session, and by giving his royal word that he would trench on none of their privileges which did not interfere with his prerogative.

But the more reluctance his majesty discovered to sanction their petition, the more necessary did it appear to insist on his compliance. If no intention existed to infringe the ancient statutes, why refuse to renew them? Were all the unauthorized stretches of royal authority to be considered as branches of the prerogative? By such arguments, Wentworth, who now stood forward as one of the most active assertors of the public rights, prevailed on the house to resolve "that grievances and supply should go hand in hand, and the latter, in no case, precede

the former." * When some proposed to rest satisfied with the king's assurances of future adherence to law, without pressing the petition of right, he strenuously opposed this dangerous remission. "There hath been," said he, "a public violation of the laws by his majesty's ministers; and nothing shall satisfy me but a public amends. Our desire to vindicate the subjects' rights exceeds not what is laid down in former laws, with some modest provision for instruction and performance." † When the Lords proposed to add to the petition a saving clause, importing that all their pretensions for liberty still left entire the claims of the sovereign power; Wentworth exclaimed against the evasion. "If we do admit of this addition," said he, "we shall leave the subject in a worse state than we found him. Let us leave all power to his majesty to bring malefactors to legal punishment; but our laws are not acquainted with *sovereign power*. We desire no new thing, nor do we offer to trench on his majesty's prerogative; but we may not recede from this petition, either in whole or in part." ‡

It was the peculiar felicity of Elizabeth, that she had the art to concede an untenable point, with the same apparent ease and good humour, as if she had

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* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 538. † Ibid. p. 554.
‡ Ibid. p. 563.

yielded to no necessity. It was the misfortune of Charles, that his compliance, even when unavoidable, was so ungracious and reluctant, as to occasion almost as much discontent as a refusal. He expressed his assent to the petition of right, but in words so unusual and evasive, that the Commons felt only an increase of their agitation; nor was it till he was alarmed by their reiterated remonstrances against abuses, and discovered their determination not to proceed with the bill of supplies, that he at length sanctioned the petition in the usual form.* Yet the Commons repaid this long delayed concession by immediately passing the bill of supplies, and by dissolving all the committees which they had appointed to investigate the abuses of government. They now proceeded to represent those existing grievances, which were particularly

* Mr Hume says, "It may be affirmed, without any exaggeration, that the king's assent to the petition of right produced such a change in the government, as was almost equivalent to a revolution; and by circumscribing, in so many articles, the royal prerogative, gave additional security to the liberties of the subject." What a pity he should not have mentioned some of the novelties which he imagined he had discovered in this petition: if there exist any such, they certainly escaped both the parliament and the king. The Lords and Commons professed that the petition was merely the substance of certain ancient statutes, nor was this allegation ever called in question by the court. The ancient statutes alluded to are either mentioned in the preamble, or cited in the margin. See the petition in Rushworth's Collections, Vol. I. p. 588.

guarded against by the petition of right; and to prosecute their charges against the Duke of Buckingham, as the chief author of pernicious counsels. But in passing the bill of supplies, they had for the present given up all hold on the forbearance of the crown. Alarmed at the danger of his favourite, and hearing that the Commons were preparing a remonstrance against tonnage and poundage, which constituted so large a portion of his revenue, but which, till granted by act of Parliament, fell clearly under the head of illegal exactions, Charles suddenly appeared in Parliament, and ended the session by prorogation. *

June 26, 1628.

Although the court thus procured a temporary respite, the few months of recess were speedily to elapse, and the necessities of the state rendered the return of the evil inevitable. The preparations requisite to maintain the war against the French and Spaniards, would soon exhaust the supplies which had been granted, and the Commons would doubtless recommence their labours where they had been forcibly interrupted. To break the force of opposition by violently removing the more active members, had already been found a vain attempt; it was now more wisely resolved to substitute promises for threats; and, by the numerous allurements in the power of the sovereign, to convert some for-

Overtures from the Court.

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 631.

ward patriots into champions of the prerogative. In these circumstances, no one more attracted their attention than Wentworth. He had already shown a willingness to engage in the service of the court, and had repaid its neglect by a bold, keen, and successful opposition. If he had displayed a decided animosity to Buckingham, it was by no means gratuitous, but had been amply purchased by the affronts with which the favourite had repaid his friendly assurances; and that animosity which made his assistance less acceptable to the duke, also rendered his opposition more formidable. All these considerations in favour of Wentworth were strengthened by the good offices of his friend Weston, who had lately been raised to the office of Lord High Treasurer; and who now repaid the confidence of his friend by a zealous patronage. But it was not by empty overtures, or flattering professions of the favourite, that Wentworth, already deceived, was to be won from a party that yielded him honour by its esteem, and authority by its support. To the promise of an immediate place in the peerage, with the title of baron, the court added an assurance of speedy advancement to a higher rank, and to the presidency of the council of York.

Accepted by him.

To these allurements Wentworth was by no means insensible. Early introduced into courts, he had been accustomed to witness the slavish submission ever paid to titles, to power, and to royal

favour, however abused, however unmerited. A profuse distribution of honours had, of late years, much diminished the estimation of nobility; yet, when coupled with authority, and the smiles of the sovereign, they still possessed charms to stimulate the ambitious. The presidency of the council of York held forth yet more powerful temptations. It conferred on him an authority almost absolute over the northern counties, over his former equals, over those adversaries who had hitherto harassed and thwarted him.

A Peer and President of the Council of York.

The favourable reception given by Wentworth to the overtures of the court was followed by farther acts of royal condescension. His friend and confident Wandesford, though lately distinguished by the violence of his opposition, and employed by the Commons in framing the articles of impeachment against Buckingham, * was also received into favour. The powers of the northern presidency, already beyond the limits of a legal jurisdiction, were further enlarged, when consigned to their new possessor. If his ambition was thus gratified, his vanity was not less powerfully assailed by the patent of barony, in which a claim he advanced to an alliance with the blood royal, through Margaret grandmother to Henry the Seventh, was ostentatiously acknowledged, and displayed as a ground

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 214, 352.

for his new honours. These favours, thus simultaneously showered on him, seem to have produced all the desired impression, and to have called forth his warmest expressions of exultation and gratitude. "You tell me," writes his friend Wandesford, "that God hath blessed you much in these late proceedings." *

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* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 49. Unfortunately for the memory of Wentworth, his admirers, anxious to render him more than man, have abandoned the plea which humanity affords to palliate his defects; and, by attempting to violate the truth of history, have exposed his conduct to additional odium. The author of the dedication to his letters, who has in this instance been followed by all his professed advocates, has undertaken to show that Wentworth was, in fact, guilty of no inconsistency. "Sir Edward Coke," says that author, "might have his particular disgust, Sir John Elliot his warmth, Mr Selden his prejudices to the bishops and clergy, and others farther designs on the constitution itself, which might cause them to carry on their opposition. But Sir Thomas Wentworth, who was a true friend to episcopal government of the church, and to a limited monarchy in the state, could have no reason, *when the petition of right was granted*, to refuse to bear his share of toils and pains in the service of the public, or to withstand the offers of those honours." This unfortunate plea only serves to fix our attention on some of the most questionable parts of Wentworth's conduct. His new honours had not yet been worn, when the petition of right was already violated; the very office which he accepted, and still more the new powers with which he was entrusted, could not be exercised without its farther violation; and we shall have too often to recount his active invasion of those very rights which the petition was formed to secure. Mr Hume, a far more dexterous advocate, while he strives to leave on the minds of his readers the most favourable impression of this statesman, obviates suspi-

To these grounds of exultation, there existed a great drawback in the capricious temper of Buckingham. Though an apparent reconciliation had taken place between them, yet Wentworth had no reason to hope for the good will, or even the permanent forbearance, of the favourite. The feelings of his Grace had indeed been soothed by the previous elevation to the peerage of Sir John Savile, the ancient and implacable antagonist of Wentworth; still, however, there were old misunderstandings, which Buckingham was not of a temper to forget, or to leave unresented. * But from these apprehensions the friends of Wentworth were unexpectedly relieved by the hand of a gloomy fanatic, who had brought himself to look on Buckingham as the great enemy of his country, and to regard this as a sufficient justification for the never justifiable crime of assassination. †

Death of Buckingham, August 23, 1628.

But there still remained an enemy more formidable, and not less irritated, than Buckingham. The sudden defection of Wentworth from his par-

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cion, in this instance, by a frank acknowledgment of the truth. "His fidelity to the king," says this historian, "was unshaken; but as he now employed all his counsels to support the prerogative which he had formerly bent all his powers to diminish, his virtue seems not to have been entirely pure, but to have been susceptible of strong impressions from private interest and ambition."

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 49. † Ibid. p. 27.

ty excited astonishment among all men; * and, when conjoined with some invidious circumstances, changed the general applause which he had hitherto enjoyed into reproach and menaces. His affectation of an alliance to the blood-royal excited ridicule: his desertion of a cause, for which he had ardently contended; his adoption of principles, which he had strenuously opposed; his reconciliation with Buckingham, whom he had branded as a traitor to his king and country; with his acceptance of an office, whose existence was a violation both of the common and statute laws of the realm; were regarded with resentment and indignation.

January 26, 1629. On reassembling after the prorogation, the parliament found, to their mortification, that their former labours had only provoked an increase of abuses. They discovered that, to the printed copies of the petition of right, the evasive, and not the satisfactory reply of the king, had, by royal authority, been appended: † that all the clergy whom they had prosecuted for promulgating the doctrines of despotism, and innovations in religion, had received his majesty's pardon: ‡ that one of these, Montague, had been promoted to the see of Chichester: § that another, Manwaring, in contempt of a sentence by the House of Peers, had been re-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 47. Epistolae Hoelianae, xxxiv.
† Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 648. ‡ Ibid. p. 653. § Ibid. p. 635.

stored to his ecclesiastical functions, and rewarded with some lucrative benefices; * that, in direct violation of the petition of right, the king had, of his sole authority, levied imposts on exports and imports: † and that the merchants who refused to pay these arbitrary exactions had been punished with the imprisonment of their persons, and the seizure of their goods. ‡

Against these invasions of the petition of right, his majesty told the Commons that their remedy was short; that, by passing an act confirming to him the duties which he had levied by his own authority, all grounds of complaint would be removed; and that, on this condition, he waved the claim of right, and would receive these taxes as their grant. § The Commons expressed no unwillingness to concede these duties; but they thought it reasonable that the king, after having so directly violated the sanction which he had given to the petition of right, should first return the goods illegally seized, and stop the prosecutions which the attorney-general had commenced against the owners. ‖ Unless this were done, a future monarch might assert, that they had only given what they had no right to withhold; that their office was to confirm, not to question the levying of these duties; and that the

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 635. † Ibid. p. 689.
‡ Ibid. p. 641, 642. § Ibid. p. 644. ‖ Ibid. p. 654.

petition of right was of no avail in opposition to the claims of the sovereign. But Charles, far from temporising, persisted, in the face of parliament, to levy the disputed imposts, to seize the goods of the refractory, and to institute prosecutions against them. * When some loyal persons, anxious to prevent the breach so rapidly approaching, endeavoured to represent these violent proceedings as the unauthorized acts of the crown officers, Charles had the spirit or temerity to disclaim the subterfuge, to avow that his officers acted by his express commands; and to declare, that any reprehension of them he should consider as a direct attack on himself. † The Commons, alarmed at these pretensions, began to deplore the renewed danger of their liberties; to lament that, though Buckingham was no more, his counsels still survived; and that the Lord Treasurer Weston, now chief minister, zealously trod in the steps of his predecessor. ‡ But to these complaints his majesty put an end, by an adjournment so sudden, that the Commons were enabled to draw up a remonstrance against tonnage and poundage, only by shutting their door against the king's messenger, and forcibly retaining the speaker in the chair. § A few days after, parliament was dissolved with marks of studied neglect; ‖

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 653, 654. † Ibid. p. 659. King's declaration. ‡ Ibid. p. 659. § Ibid. p. 660. ‖ Ibid.

the king, in his parting speech, branded the more active members with the appellation of *vipers*, and even committed several of them to prison. * March 10, 1629.

Freed, by this angry dissolution, from the hostility of his former associates, Wentworth could now repay the bounty of his sovereign, by a zealous support of his favourite plan of government. The council of York, or of the North, was peculiarly suited to the genius of an absolute monarchy. The forms of administering justice had been the same in the four northern counties, as in the rest of England, till the thirty-first year of Henry VIII. (1541;) when an insurrection, attended with much bloodshed and disorder, induced that monarch to grant a commission of Oyer and Terminer to the Archbishop of York, with some lawyers and gentlemen of that county, for the purpose of investigating the grounds of the outrages, and bringing the malefactors to punishment. † The good effects of the commission, in restoring tranquillity, caused it to be prolonged; and on the reappearance of commotions in those quarters, it was, in succeed- Conduct as President of the Council of York.

* They were detained many years in prison, because they refused to pay large fines and make a submission. Sir John Elliot died in confinement.

† The jurisdiction of this commission extended over the counties of York, Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, the bishopric of Durham, the cities of York, Hull, and Newcastle-on-Tyne. Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 162.

ing times, frequently renewed. A permanent abuse gradually arose out of a simple expedient. Elizabeth, and after her James, found it convenient to alter the tenor of the commission, to increase the sphere of its jurisdiction, and to augment its circumscribed legal authority by certain discretionary powers. And to such an ascendancy was this court raised, by the enlarged instructions granted to Wentworth, that the council of York now engrossed the whole jurisdiction of the four northern counties, and embraced the powers of the courts of common law, the Chancery, and even the exorbitant authority of the Star Chamber. * Yet Wentworth still felt his authority too circumscribed, and twice applied for an enlargement of its boundaries. †

The vast power thus committed to his hands, Wentworth successfully employed in the cause of the crown. Abandoning all his former recreations, and devoting himself wholly to business, he speedily reformed what the remissness of his predecessor had deranged. He caused the militia to be embodied and disciplined, and by vigorously enforcing the fines on recusants, the compositions for knighthood, and the other exactions imposed by

* See the speech of Mr Hyde, afterwards Lord Clarendon, in Rushworth's Collections, Vol. II. p. 162. Also ibid. p. 158.

† Clarendon's Hist. of the Rebellion, Vol. I. p. 239, 240.

government, he quickly succeeded in raising the revenue of the king, within his jurisdiction, to four or five times its former amount. *

There seems little ground for the charge, afterwards preferred against him, that he had exceeded the bounds of his commission; since it would be difficult to assign any limits to his authority. We find him represented by the popish recusants as proceeding against them "with extreme rigour, valuing the goods and lands of the poorest at the highest rates, or rather above the value; and refusing, on any other terms, to admit them to a composition. † This complaint, however, was disbelieved by the Treasurer Weston, to whom it was addressed; ‡ and the conduct of Wentworth, in regard to recusants, received the unqualified approbation of a court by no means inclined to treat them with rigour. § It was with more justice that he was accused of exceeding the limits of his jurisdiction, when he caused a person to be arrested in London for offences against his court; and refused to regard the prohibitions of the judges. ‖ These and other irregularities were sanctioned by government: but it was impossible to justify either his procur-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 90. He states that he had raised the revenue from L. 2000 to L. 9500 a-year.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 52. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid. p. 51.

‖ Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 159, 160.

ing or exercising a commission, that, in the words of Clarendon, "placed the northern counties entirely beyond the protection of the common law; that included fifty-eight instructions, of which scarcely one did not exceed or directly violate the common law; and that, by its natural operation, had almost overwhelmed the country under the sea of arbitrary power, and involved the people in a labyrinth of distemper, oppression, and poverty." *

The unpopularity incurred by Wentworth in the discharge of this office proceeded chiefly from two causes—from his sudden change of party, and from a natural vehemence of temper which new circumstances rendered more conspicuous. If, in his early youth, he had betrayed some indications of a disposition impetuous, overbearing, and vindictive; these turbulent symptoms, soothed by the tranquillity of a private station, and meeting with but trivial excitements, had yielded to the influence of a sound and vigorous judgment. But now, exasperated by the censure of opponents, elevated by the applause of friends, and stimulated by the possession of uncontrolled power; the passions of Wentworth at times burst forth with unexpected violence. He procured respect for his power

* See Lord Clarendon's Report in Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 162, 163, 164.

by causing it to be felt, and silenced opposition by the activity of his vengeance. His prosecution of Henry Bellasis, son to Lord Faulconberg, betrayed a punctilious apprehension of encroachment on his consequence, which can scarcely be reconciled with true dignity of mind. * On another occasion, Wentworth, having caused a delinquent to kneel before him, expressed much displeasure at this act of humiliation not being sufficiently protracted. † His vindictive prosecution of Sir David Foulis merits a more severe censure. The charges presented against this man, in the Star Chamber, were some disrespectful mention of the council of York, some invidious insinuations against its president, with his instigation of some persons not to pay the composition for knighthood, which he considered as an illegal and oppressive exaction. At the repeated instance of Wentworth, who urged his sig-

* This young nobleman was charged before the privy-council with having come into a room, at a public meeting, without showing any particular reverence to the lord president; and with having aggravated the offence, by keeping his hat immoveably fixed on his head, when his lordship, in state, departed from the assembly. Bellasis pleaded that his negligence arose solely from accident; that he had never been guilty of intentional disrespect; and that, having his face turned the other way, he was not aware of his lordship's approach till he had passed. It was not, however, till after a month's imprisonment, and a written acknowledgment of his contrition, that this apology was accepted. Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 88.

† Ibid. p. 160.

nal punishment as a warning to others, * Foulis was degraded from his offices of Deputy Lieutenant, Justice of the Peace, and Member of the Council of York: he was fined five thousand pounds to the king, three thousand to Lord Wentworth; and committed to the Fleet prison during his majesty's pleasure. His son, who had partaken in the offence, was also imprisoned, and fined five hundred pounds to the king. †

Promotion. From the presidency of the council of York, Wentworth was speedily called to serve the crown in a more extended sphere. Though Charles, on the death of Buckingham, had formed a resolution never again to consign himself so completely into the hands of another favourite, it was soon apparent that Bishop Laud retained much of his patron's influence. Till his fiftieth year, Laud had

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 91, 145, 146, 189. In a letter to Secretary Cottington, (p. 145,) he says, "The sentencing this man settles the right of knighting business bravely for the crown: for, in your sentence, you will certainly declare the undoubted prerogatives the king hath therein by common law, by statute law, and the undeniable practice of all times." "I protest to God," he adds, "if it were in the person of another, I should in a case so foul, and with proof so clear, fine the father and the son in two thousand pounds apiece to his majesty, and the same to me for the scandal, besides open acknowledgments." The earnestness with which he expresses his thankfulness to his friends in the privy-council, who had promoted the sentence, shows how acceptable a service they had rendered him. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 189, 104, 202.

† See their trials in Rushworth, Vol. II. 215—290.

lived immured in the seclusion of a college, distinguished only for the singularity of his notions, his frequent controversies, and the pertinacious ardour with which he maintained his theological opinions. Brought at length into the notice of ecclesiastics of influence, he was introduced to Buckingham; and succeeded so completely in gaining the good will of the favourite, that he was received into his inmost confidence, and became his principal adviser. The career of his promotion was for some time retarded by King James, who looked with suspicion on his religious principles; but the ascendancy of Buckingham over Charles easily removed these obstacles; and Laud, after passing through some inferior sees, was created Bishop of London, and enabled to lift his eyes to the primacy. Deriving, from his long researches among the ecclesiastical writers of the dark ages, a profound veneration for superstitious ceremonies, and an exalted opinion of ecclesiastical power; he proposed, as the grand object of his ambition, to reinstate the prelacy in its former ascendancy, to adorn the Church of England with the mysterious rites of Catholicism, and to extend his power and his tenets over every part of the kingdom. Impatient to execute his designs, and regardless of circumstances, it was to him no obstacle that an approximation to the Church of Rome was almost universally regarded with abhorrence; that the tide of popular

opinion ran directly against him; and that the power of the sovereign, already shaken, must be endangered to its foundation by enforcing such innovations. His maxim was "*to go through*" with his purposes, and to leave consequences to futurity. Irritable by nature, and jealous of his dignity, he had become, by the possession of power, incapable of enduring contradiction, and disdainful of all arts of conciliation; and while he gratified Charles, by exalting the royal authority to the utmost, he took care that his own order should occupy the highest steps of the throne. *

To the Government of Ireland.

With this man, who now possessed such influence with the king, Wentworth had the address to form a firm and intimate connection. Laud had sufficient opportunity to observe the talents and vigour of the President of the North, and soon found reason to depend on his zealous co-operation. Next to these in the royal favour stood the Marquis of Hamilton; and each soon found an appropriate place in the plan of government, which the new counsels of Charles induced him to adopt. Having removed his most urgent necessities, by the conclusion of peace with France and Spain, he now set himself in good earnest to establish his independent autho-

* Burnet's History of his own Times, Vol. I. p. 67, 68. Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 65. Archbishop Abbot's Narrative in Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 440. Laud's Diary.

rity. But as England, Scotland, and Ireland, had each their separate interests, their peculiar discontents; he found it convenient to consign a portion of his dominions to the particular superintendence of each minister. Laud, along with the supreme control of religion throughout the empire, obtained the chief direction of English affairs; Hamilton managed the business of Scotland; and Wentworth, with the title of Lord Deputy, obtained the government of Ireland. *

Disordered state of Ireland.

If this new station brought Wentworth an accession of dignity, it called for the exertion of all his prudence, dexterity, and resolution. The conquest of Ireland, undertaken by the unjustifiable ambition of Henry the Second, had been feebly prosecuted by his successors. Presenting few temptations to ambition, and still fewer to avarice, it was, for the most part, abandoned to such desperate adventurers as were willing to purchase uncultivated possessions by a perilous struggle with the natives. The English settlements extended only to a few districts around Dublin, and the rest of the country was abandoned to the uncivilized Irish, who, issuing from their morasses and fortresses, occasionally retaliated the devastations of their op-

* Rushworth's Preface to Vol. II. Radcliffe's Essay. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I.

pressors. Instead of communicating their more improved habits, the English settlers, engaged in a continual warfare, contracted the ferocious manners of the Irish; and could at length be distinguished only by their language, and their inveterate antipathy to the natives. The salutary customs of the invaders were wholly lost to Ireland; and the edicts introducing their laws disregarded. Parliaments, composed entirely of delegates from within the English Pale, and summoned at the discretion of the lord deputy, were employed as the best means to sanction every act of oppression, and screen the offender from punishment.

These disorders had been in some measure alleviated by the wholesome regulations introduced by Sir Edward Poynings, who governed Ireland in the reign of Henry the Seventh. By his influence, the Irish parliament decreed that all the laws hitherto enacted in England should be equally in force in Ireland. And, as the discretionary power which the lords-lieutenants possessed, of summoning parliaments at pleasure, and passing what measures they desired, had given rise to excessive abuses and loud complaints; he caused it to be enacted, that a parliament should not be summoned above once a year in Ireland, nor even then till the propositions on which it was to decide had been seen and approved by the privy-council of

England.* But by the native Irish these advantages were unfelt and unregarded. Exasperated by the harsh and wanton insults of their invaders, they had contracted an unusual ferocity of manners; and being accounted unworthy of the rights of humanity, they had almost ceased to retain the character of men. Abandoning cultivation, they enjoyed, amidst their fastnesses, the pride of savage independence; and looked down with disdain on the more civilized habits of the English. Their scattered tribes, without arms, without discipline, and without concert, were unable to expel even the feeble settlements of their adversaries; and possessed just sufficient force to cover the frontier with alarm, rapine, and bloodshed.

Towards the conclusion of Elizabeth's reign, the mismanagement of the English governors, and the secret aids of arms and officers from Spain, enabled the native chiefs to form such extensive insurrections, as obliged the queen to think seriously of completing their subjugation. Various attempts were made by Essex and others, without success; but Lord Montjoy at length penetrated into the heart of the Irish retreats, took their castles, dispersed their predatory bands, and established detachments for the suppression of future disorders. He closed his vigorous and honourable administra-

* Leland's History of Ireland, edit. 1773, Vol. II. p. 107, 511.

tion with emancipating the whole body of Irish peasantry from subjection to their native chiefs, and receiving them under the immediate protection of government. *

With a judgment which reflects more honour on the memory of King James than all his other measures, that monarch resolved to give effect to the plan so happily conceived. Large tracts of waste country which remained, by conquest or forfeiture, in the hands of the crown, were parcelled out in moderate divisions, and distributed among new settlers from England and Scotland. By their example, it was hoped, that the ancient inhabitants, now compelled to desist from their predatory warfare, would gradually be initiated in the arts and manners of civilized life. The rude customs of the Irish were now discountenanced; the laws of England every where enforced; courts of judicature, after the model of the English, established; and representatives from every quarter of the kingdom summoned to Parliament. †

Had the prosecution of this plan corresponded to its auspicious commencement, Ireland might have quickly approached the mother country in civilization. But various abuses and accidents intervened to impede its progress. Many of those who undertook to settle the new plantations executed

* Leland, Vol. II. p. 416. † Ibid. p. 429 to 450.

their contract slowly and imperfectly; yet the king, charmed with the partial benefits resulting from his measures, became an enthusiast in the scheme of plantation. Not content with distributing all the lands in the actual possession of the crown, he encouraged adventurers to discover flaws in the titles of old proprietors; and had the injustice to make room for these informers, by dispossessing the owners of estates, for defects in their tenures, as old as the original conquest of Ireland. The success of these interested discoverers now spread alarm and indignation throughout the island, while every one trembled lest some unknown and obsolete claim of the crown should suddenly drive him from the inheritance of his fathers. *

The despotic maxims of government, introduced under Charles I. in England, soon extended their unhappy influence to the sister kingdom. The courts of common law began to find their jurisdiction invaded by the arbitrary decrees of the privy-council. The rights of juries were infringed; the extortions, which the English people suffered from an ill-paid soldiery, were still more severely felt in Ireland; and the execution of martial law, which here also was introduced, was attended with still greater abuses. †

The discontents arising from these circumstances

* Leland, Vol. II. p. 466, 468. † Ibid. p. 470.

were embittered by theological discord. From the introduction of Protestantism by Queen Elizabeth, religious zeal had mingled with the political animosity of the Irish; and, though not the cause, had often been the pretext of their insurrections. * The Popish clergy inflamed the bigotry of an ignorant people; the old English settlers of the Pale were not less zealous than the native Irish, for the faith of their forefathers; and the penalties now enforced against recusants were equally odious to all. On the other hand, the new planters, whom James introduced from England and Scotland, carried along with them the tenets of the Presbyterians and Puritans, all their antipathy to the Catholics, and all their dislike to a religious ceremonial. The rigour of the church courts, and the exaction of tithes, formed great aggravations of these discontents. †

Lord Falkland, whom Charles had appointed lord-deputy, found the hands of government too weak to chastise the seditious and disorderly. The armed force of Ireland had been allowed to dwindle to thirteen hundred and fifty foot, and two hundred horse: the companies into which this insignificant body was divided were commanded by privy-counsellors, who took care to secure the pay out of the receipts of the exchequer, and com-

* Leland, Vol. II. p. 412. † Ibid. p. 481.

pounded with the privates for a third or fourth part of the government allowance. The privates, who were often the menial servants of the officers, possessed neither the appearance nor the spirit of soldiers, and excited only contempt among the turbulent inhabitants. *

The embarrassments of the English government, and an annual deficiency of the Irish revenue, prevented Charles from listening to the repeated demands of Falkland for an increase of the army. At length, however, he resolved to augment his Irish forces to five thousand foot and five-hundred horse; and, to prevent this new charge from falling on his exhausted treasury, he commanded them to be quartered on the different towns and counties, each of which was, for three months in turn, to receive a certain portion of the troops, and supply them with pay, clothes, and subsistence. †

The people of Ireland, informed of this purpose, resolved, by a liberal voluntary contribution, to avert the vexatious imposition, and to procure the redress of their most prominent grievances. The Catholics, who had most to apprehend from the execution of the existing penal statutes, were the first movers in this plan; and the Protestants had sufficient grounds to concur heartily in the

* Leland, Vol. II. p. 471, 472. † Ibid. p. 480.

proposal. By permission of Lord Falkland, delegates from both parties passed over to London, and laid their offers and their requests at the foot of the throne. For the maintenance of the troops they offered a voluntary contribution of one hundred thousand pounds, to be paid by instalments of ten thousand pounds a quarter; a far larger sum than had hitherto been obtained from the poverty of Ireland. The *graces*, or concessions, which they demanded in return, were extremely moderate. They related to certain abuses arising from barbarous manners and a defective police; to exactions in the courts of justice; depredations committed by the soldiery; monopolies in trade; penal statutes on account of religion; retrospective inquiries into defective titles, beyond a period of sixty years; and while relief from these grievances was prayed, they desired the confirmation of the concession by an Irish parliament. * The last two articles were by no means acceptable to Charles. He had formed a design to augment his revenue, and gratify his courtiers, by the discovery of ancient flaws in the titles of the present proprietors; and to grant a parliament to Ireland was a conspicuous departure from that plan of government which he was attempting to consolidate in England. His necessities, however, were urgent, the

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 320.

contribution opportune; he therefore judged it expedient to give, for the present, his unreserved assent to all the demands.

The joy diffused over Ireland by these concessions was soon allayed by suspicions of the king's sincerity. Lord Falkland, when informed of the royal sanction, hastened to gratify the people by issuing writs for a parliament; but by a strange omission, these writs proved altogether invalid. According to the law of Poynings, explained and ratified by subsequent statutes,* no parliament could be summoned in Ireland, till a certificate of the laws to be proposed in it, with the reasons for enacting them, should first be transmitted by the deputy and council to England, and his majesty's licence under the great seal be obtained for holding it.† As Falkland, without attending to these essential forms, had, by his own authority, issued the writs, they were, by the English council, declared null and void.‡ This irregularity was suspected to proceed from some collusion between Falkland and the court of England; and as no steps were taken to repair an error so easily amended, it became evident that the meeting of a parliament was intentionally delayed.§ 1628.

The imprudence of the Catholics threatened

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* 3d and 4th Phil. and Mary.
† Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 20.
‡ Ibid. p. 19.
§ Leland, Vol. II. p. 486.

also to involve Ireland in domestic broils. Elevated by their favourable reception at court, and confident of the queen's protection, they beheld, in the late concessions, the earnest of a complete victory, which seemed due to their superior numbers, and still more to the imagined verity of their creed. Churches were seized for their worship; the streets of Dublin thronged with their processions; an academy erected for the religious instruction of their youth; and their clergy reinforced by swarms of young priests from the seminaries of France and Spain.* By these transactions, both the Protestants and the English government had reason to be alarmed; since the clergy, who entirely led the people, universally maintained the Pope's supremacy, and had bound themselves to labour for the propagation of the faith, and the extirpation of heretics. †

Roused by the loud remonstrances of the Protestants, Falkland at length issued a proclamation prohibiting the Romish clergy from exercising a control over the people, and from celebrating their worship in public. ‡ This edict, strongly expressed but feebly enforced, served only to incense the Catholics without satisfying the Protestants. The recusants complained that the promised

* Leland, Vol. III. p. 3. † Ibid. p. 4.
‡ Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 21.

graces were withheld; and now represented, as an insupportable burden, that voluntary contribution which, at first, they had so cheerfully paid. In vain did government endeavour to appease their discontents by consenting to accept the contribution by instalments of five, instead of ten thousand pounds a quarter: the general clamour, unjustly directed against Lord Falkland, became so loud as at length to procure his recall. *

The temporary administration, on which the management of affairs now devolved, was still more obnoxious to the Catholics. The two Lords Justices, Viscount Ely and the Earl of Cork, the former Lord Chancellor, and the latter Lord High Treasurer of Ireland, were zealous anti-Catholics; and, without waiting for orders from England, proceeded to a rigorous execution of the penal statutes against the recusants. The latter derived a temporary courage from an intimation of the royal displeasure at these proceedings; but, having come to open blows with the Protestants, they had the mortification to witness the suppression of the academy and religious houses, which they had erected in Dublin. † 1630.

To the difficulties thus caused to the government, was added the embarrassing consideration that the voluntary contribution was soon to termi-

* Leland, Vol. II. p. 5, 6. † Ibid. Vol. III. p. 6, 7, 8.

nate. The Irish, exasperated by the evasion of the promised concessions, were not likely to continue their voluntary supplies; and it seemed a desperate attempt for a divided government, with a feeble army, to enforce compulsory exactions. Yet it was impossible for the court of England, pressed by its aggravated necessities, to defray the expence of an augmented army in Ireland; and some prompt and decisive measures seemed requisite to prevent that distracted island from becoming not only useless but dangerous to the monarchy. Such was the situation of affairs when Wentworth was appointed to the administration of Ireland.

January 1632. Although he received his commission at the commencement of 1632, it was not till July in the following year that he was able to reach the place of his destination. The arrangements for his private affairs, and for the administration of his presidency in his absence, occupied a considerable time. And when all these were completed, he was still delayed some months for the arrival of a man of war from the Thames; for, strange as it may now appear, so dangerously was the Irish Channel infested with pirates, that Wentworth could not venture to pass over without convoy. *

Dexterity in raising supplies. But, during this interval, the lord deputy was

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 85, 87.

not inactive. He carefully informed himself of the state of his new government, planned the measures of his future administration, and ascertained the powers necessary to give efficiency to his authority. * He also gave his serious attention to the most difficult of all departments, the raising of supplies. The voluntary contribution was now paid up, and it was indispensable, either by its renewal, or by some other method, to procure resources for the maintenance of the army till his arrival in Ireland. But the lords justices, on being applied to, declared it as their decided opinion, that there were no other means of supply than that of rigorously levying the penalties imposed by statute on the Catholics, for absence from public worship. Wentworth was averse to an expedient which he knew to be unacceptable to the English court, and calculated to excite bitter discontent among the Catholics. He resolved, if possible, to procure a continuance of the voluntary contribution; and in the letter of the lords justices he found an expedient to alarm the Catholics into compliance. By his direction, the king wrote to the lords justices, bitterly complaining of the evils which they had represented, the impossibility of raising voluntary supplies, and the necessity of levying the penalties. "If this indeed be the case, I must," adds the

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p 61—93.

king, "as you advise, *streighten* the graces which I have granted, and, rather than let the army loose on the inhabitants, take advantage of my *legal rights and profits.*" *

While awaiting the effect of this letter, Wentworth dispatched to Ireland a Catholic agent, to represent to his brethren the lord deputy's regard for their interests, his willingness to act as mediator between them and the king, and his hopes that a moderate voluntary contribution would be accepted as a substitute for their heavy fines. † Having discovered that his temporary representatives, the lords justices, were seeking to counteract his purposes, he reprimanded their presumption in such terms as made them anxious to avoid, by any sacrifice, the resentment of so peremptory a governor. ‡ Alarmed and silenced by these dexterous measures, all parties agreed to enlarge their voluntary contribution, by four additional quarterly payments of five thousand pounds each; and Wentworth was thus enabled to mature, without embarrassment, his plans for a permanent revenue.

Principal objects.

The grand objects proposed by the lord deputy were to render the king's power completely uncontrollable in Ireland; to derive from her a revenue sufficient both to support her own expenditure and

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 71.

† Ibid. p. 74. ‡ Ibid. p. 76, 77.

to aid the treasury of England; and thus, by every expedient, to render the province advantageous to the crown. Schemes he had for enriching Ireland, and plans for promoting her civilization; but, "in all these affairs," writes he to the king, "the benefit of the crown must and shall be my principal, nay, my *sole* end." *

Instructions for his government.

The king had allowed Wentworth full discretion to draw up his plan of governing, and the conditions for which he stipulated discover no less sagacity than ambition. Never was a monarch more beset by rapacious courtiers: already had they procured the reversion of the most valuable offices in Ireland; and it was not to be doubted that the Irish treasury, if anywise enriched, would become the object of their watchful avarice. Wentworth therefore provided, in the first article of his instructions, that his majesty should bestow no grant on the Irish establishment before the ordinary revenue of the crown in that country should be equal to its charges, and its debts fully cleared. To secure the patronage necessary to the influence of the governor, he made farther and more important stipulations, viz.

That none of the grants already given for the reversion of offices in Ireland should be confirmed, and none for the future bestowed.

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* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 342.

That no grant, of what nature soever, relative to Ireland, should be suffered to pass till it were first made known to the deputy, and sanctioned by the seal of that kingdom.

That no person should be appointed a bishop, a judge, a privy-counsellor, or a law officer of any description in Ireland, till his majesty had first consulted with the deputy.

That the same rule should be observed before any new office were created in that kingdom.

That the places usually in the deputy's gift, both civil and military, should be freely left to his own disposal, and not granted by his majesty to the importunity of any candidate in England.

And that no particular complaint of injustice or oppression, against any person in Ireland, should be admitted at the English court, unless it appeared that the party aggrieved had first addressed himself to the deputy.

A committee of the English privy-council had been set apart for the consideration of Irish affairs: but, to ensure secrecy, and prevent obstructions, it was now provided that all propositions from the deputy, relative to the revenue, might be communicated exclusively to his friend the Lord Treasurer, and his other dispatches addressed solely to Secretary Coke. *

* See these instructions in Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 65, 66.

In these ample instructions, Wentworth, before his departure from England, procured such alterations as he judged expedient, * with this remarkable addition, that he was to consider them as changeable on the spot whenever the advancement of his majesty's affairs required. † He received the fullest assurance that, in all his measures, the king would avow and support him. ‡

Of these vast discretionary powers, he afterwards procured such specific confirmations as he judged expedient. While Ireland continued to be governed entirely as a conquered country, the lord deputy and his council had occasionally superseded the courts of common law, and assumed the decision of private civil causes. This practice, so liable to glaring abuse, had been prohibited by proclamation, during the government of Lord Falkland. Wentworth, however, soon discovering that there were many cases in which the course of the common law would obstruct his projected measures, procured a suspension of the prohibition; and numerous suitors, who hoped from favour what they could not expect from truth, crowded from the ordinary courts to the Castle Chamber. § That persons of rank and consequence might not carry their complaints against his government to the

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 86.
† Ibid. p. 91. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid. p. 202, 223.

throne, Wentworth procured his majesty's order, that none of the nobility or principal officers should presume to quit Ireland without a special licence from the lord deputy. * For the sanction of his more delicate measures, he procured a private and direct correspondence with the king himself; and from the introduction of his confidential friends, Wandesford and Radcliffe, to official situations, and to the privy-council, he derived a select cabinet, with whom he could in secret discuss his resolutions and enterprises. †

Treatment of the Privy-Council.

Armed with these extraordinary powers, he commenced his government with an activity and vigour, which promised a speedy revolution in the state of affairs. From the privy-council, which had been accustomed to bear a great sway in the management of the state, which included the lords justices, along with the most considerable person-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 348, 362. Wentworth was countenanced in this measure by the 37th grace, which enacted the same provision, but with a different view—to prevent men of large fortunes from deserting their estates, and wasting their revenues abroad. Ibid. p. 324.

† We learn from Radcliffe's Essay, that Wentworth, since the retirement of Mr Greenwood to his living, had been accustomed to take the advice of those two friends on all his affairs, both public and private, scarcely writing a letter without submitting it to their inspection. In his dispatches, he often speaks of their introduction to the privy-council, and their private assistance, as his greatest aid in the management of his government.

ages in Ireland, he had reason to expect a troublesome opposition to measures, which tended to annihilate every balance to the authority of the sovereign. His conduct, therefore, from the commencement, was calculated to shake their confidence, and awe them into submission. In calling his first privy-council, he summoned only a select number of the members; a mode of proceeding which, though usual at the English court, was hitherto unknown in Ireland, and occasioned inexpressible mortification to those who were omitted. But the more honoured number found little reason to be proud of the distinction. After assembling at the time appointed, they were left for some hours to wait the leisure of the lord deputy; and when he at length arrived, the business which he introduced required their attention rather as auditors than counsellors. *

A provision for the immediate necessities of government, especially the maintenance of the army, was the subject which he submitted to them at the next interview. After he had waited for some time to hear their propositions, a sullen silence was at length broke by Sir Adam Loftus, son of the Lord Chancellor, who proposed that the voluntary contribution should be continued for another year,

* Leland, Vol. III. p. 12, 13. Carte's Life of Ormond, Vol. I. p. 57. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 97, 98.

and that a parliament should, in the meantime, be requested, to reform abuses, and establish a permanent revenue. The proposal met with an unpromising reception, and was openly opposed by Sir William Parsons, Master of the Wards, who doubted whether their act could bind the nation at large, and whether the people could be brought to acquiesce in such repeated demands on their unrequited generosity. Wentworth now thought it time to interpose. He had, he said, called them together, not from any necessity, but to afford them an opportunity of showing their loyalty; that the Protestants, who shared most largely in the favours of government, ought to imitate the example of liberality, last year set them by the Catholics; and "if my arguments are ineffectual, I will," he added, "undertake, at the peril of my head, to make the king's army subsist, and provide for itself in Ireland, without your assistance." * After this imperious language, he found it expedient to express a hope, that their obedience would be speedily rewarded by a parliament in Ireland; and so extremely was a parliament desired, that the prospect of it procured a cheerful acquiescence in the proposal of Sir Adam Loftus, not only from the privy-council, but throughout the island. †

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 99. † Ibid. Leland, Vol. III. p. 11.

A parliament was regarded by the people of Ireland as the only means of procuring redress for their grievances, and security for their rights. They had, indeed, carried their complaints to the throne, and experienced a gracious assent to their demands; but the faith of the monarch had been violated with so little scruple, that a solemn act of the legislature could alone merit their confidence. It was the hope of a parliament that first induced them to propose a voluntary contribution, and that had since allured them to acquiesce in its continuance. *

His efforts to procure a Parliament for Ireland.

Wentworth had the sagacity to perceive the impropriety of refusing this universal wish of the Irish. He had remarked the sudden alacrity of the council on the mention of a parliament, † and he clearly saw that the nation at large was actuated by similar feelings. Were the people disappointed in this favourite object, what means would remain to government to supply its recurring necessities? Would he not at length be compelled to put his threat in execution, and march, at the head of an army, to exact their reluctant contributions? A contingency which would endanger a civil war, and tarnish the lustre of his administration, rendered the lord deputy no less eager than

* Leland, Vol. III. p. 14.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 99.

the Irish to procure a parliament. But the extreme aversion of the king to those assemblies presented a very discouraging obstacle: while attempting to consolidate his independent authority in England, it seemed a dangerous example to yield a parliament to Ireland. He had, indeed, given his royal word for this concession; but the confirmation of the other graces, which had been expressly stated as the principal object of a parliament, was what he desired above all things to evade. From the discovery of defective titles, he still hoped to increase his own revenue, and gratify his courtiers; and he was unwilling to give the proprietors a security which would put an end to these pretensions. *

January 22, 1634. Wentworth was well acquainted with these objections of the king; yet did he not despair to overcome them by more powerful considerations. In an elaborate dispatch, he represented that the English and Irish parliaments were widely different; that the former might propose what they pleased for debate, and pursue or drop it at pleasure; while, by the provident law of Poynings, the latter could occupy itself only with such topics as had first been canvassed and approved by the privy-council of England. † He dwelt on the exi-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 252.

† The import of Poynings' law gave rise to many violent contro-

gencies of the state, the urgent necessity of making some permanent provision for them, and the propriety of trying the authorized methods, before resorting to extraordinary and dangerous courses. As more than the public revenue of Ireland was spent on its internal establishments, and the bur-

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versies, both before and after the time of Wentworth. It was, we have seen, originally gratifying to the Irish as a defence against those governors, who, by means of parliaments hastily summoned, were enabled to procure the sanction of the legislature to their most tyrannical acts. Hence the expediency of a provision, that no parliament should be summoned in Ireland, till an exposition of the bills to be debated in it was first transmitted to the English privy-council. But when, in the revolution of circumstances, the people became interested that parliaments should be more frequently held, and the court that they should be discontinued, it was discovered that this provision admitted of two interpretations. The popular party maintained that, if measures were produced, of sufficient weight to satisfy the king and council, the intention of the law of Poynings was fulfilled; and that it was never designed to preclude the members of parliament, when once assembled, from introducing such other topics as they might deem expedient for the general welfare. But the partizans of the court contended, that the express letter of the law was not to be thus evaded; that the previous approbation of the king and council was distinctly required to each proposition; and that no other measures could ever be made the subject of discussion. This latter interpretation, which gave the king so decided a control over parliamentary motions, was firmly maintained by Wentworth; and rendered subservient by him, in the sequel, to very important purposes. He frequently takes occasion, in his letters and dispatches, to applaud the law; declare that "he is infinitely in love with this prerogative;" and extols it as "a mighty power gotten by the wisdom of former times." Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 269.

dens hitherto laid on that country had been extremely light, his majesty had the strongest claims on the liberality of the nation. And what their gratitude should deny, might be expected from their fears, since they laboured under a serious apprehension that the voluntary contribution, already levied for several successive years, might ultimately be demanded as a hereditary charge. If these reasons should appear sufficient for calling a parliament, there were grounds equally strong for taking this step without delay. If deferred till the voluntary contribution should again be about to terminate, it would appear to proceed from necessity: the parliament would be emboldened to clog their grants with conditions; "and conditions," added Wentworth, "are not to be admitted with any subjects, much less with this people, where your majesty's absolute sovereignty goes much higher than it is taken (perhaps) to be in England."

He unfolded a plan which he had devised, to avert those uneasy demands for the confirmation of the "graces," which his majesty so much apprehended. He proposed to divide the parliament into two sessions, the first of which should be exclusively devoted to the subject of supplies; while the second, which might be held six months afterwards, should be occupied with the confirmation of the "graces," and other national measures. Par-

liament, from a desire to conciliate the good will of its sovereign, would, in its first session, in all probability, grant a sufficient supply for the expenditure of three years; and this concession once secured, his majesty might hold what language he pleased with respect to the "graces." Wentworth pledged himself to procure the return of a nearly equal number of Protestants and Catholics to the House of Commons; that both parties, being nearly balanced against each other, might be more easily managed. He proposed to obtain qualifications for a sufficient number of military officers, whose situations rendered them dependent on the crown, and ready to give their votes as the deputy should direct. Could the parties be nearly balanced, peculiar arguments would not be wanting for each; the Catholics might be privately warned, that if no other provision should be made for the maintenance of the army, it would become necessary to levy on them the legal fines; while the Protestants should be given to understand, that, until a regular revenue should be established, his majesty could not let go the voluntary contribution, or irritate the recusants by the execution of penal statutes. As to the upper house, he concluded that his majesty might reckon on all the bishops; and there were motives enough of hope and fear, to prevent any serious opposition from the temporal lords. *

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 183 to 187. This dispatch is also inserted in Rushworth's Collections, Vol. II. p. 208 to 212.

Charles at length yielded to these representations, and transmitted the necessary orders for holding a parliament; * yet was he careful, in his confidential letters, to caution the lord deputy against this grand object of his suspicion and abhorrence. "As for that hydra," said he, "take good heed; for you know that here I have found it cunning as well as malicious. It is true that your grounds are well laid, and, I assure you, that I have a great trust in your care and judgment: yet my opinion is, that it will not be the worse for my service, though their obstinacy make you break them, for I fear that they have some ground to demand more than it is fit for me to give." † Charles was, not unreasonably, afraid lest his royal sanction formerly given to the "graces," should be urged as a tenable ground for demanding their confirmation; and he distrusted even the address of Wentworth to elude the requisition. ‡

Methods to subdue opposition.

The deputy, however, found, in his own dexterity and vigour, resources adequate to the occasion; and proceeded, with a high and resolute hand, to subdue every appearance of opposition. When the council, in conformity with the provisions of Poynings' law, assembled to deliberate on

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 231.

† King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 233.

‡ Ibid. p. 252.

the propositions to be transmitted to his majesty, as subjects for the discussion of the ensuing parliament; they ventured to suggest several popular laws as necessary to conciliate the houses. And, in regard to subsidies, instead of transmitting the bill with blanks to be filled up at his majesty's discretion, they were of opinion that the amount should both be specified, and confined within the strictest limits of necessity. Wentworth interrupted their proceedings with indignation. He reminded them that, as privy-counsellors, it was their business to study, not what should please the people, but what might gratify the king: his majesty, he assured them, would admit of no conditions, no bargaining for his favour; that he was resolved to procure a permanent and adequate revenue; and that he was desirous to accomplish this by a parliament, only as the most beaten tract, *yet not more legal than if done by his royal prerogative*, if the ordinary way should fail him. Should the king be disappointed, where he hath every reason to expect compliance, "in a cause so just and necessary, I will not scruple to appear at the head of the army, and there either persuade you that his majesty hath reason on his side, or perish in the execution of an honourable duty." He gave them to understand, that they would assuredly gain most by a ready and cheerful compliance. He reminded them of the irreparable breach which had taken

place between the king and the parliament in England, and which had led to such extraordinary and unwelcome measures. "I could tell them," says he, "as one that had held his eyes as open to these proceedings as any one, that to whatever other cause this mischief might be attributed, it arose solely from the ill-grounded and narrow suspicions of the parliament, and their obstinate refusal to yield to the king that confidence which he so justly demanded from his people."*

This address, delivered with energy and vehemence, produced the desired effect. Confounded and abashed, the council felt as if they had stood in the presence of a despotic sovereign; and silently acquiesced in all the proposals of Wentworth. †

The lords of the Pale had, in former times, possessed a great control in the administration of Irish affairs; and the privy-council had been accustomed to submit to their inspection and deliberation,

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 237, 238, 239. This language from one, who had so actively infused these suspicions, and who had insisted that redress should ever precede supplies, did not escape the unlucky jeers of Wentworth's associates at court. Laud, with his usual love for a jest, writes him, that when that part of his dispatch, which mentioned his reprobation of the turbulent proceedings of the English parliament, was read before the committee of the privy-council, Lord Cottington added, *Et quorum pars magna fui!* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 255.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 255.

the projected acts which were to be transmitted for the approbation of the king. The Earl of Fingal was deputed by his brother peers to represent this ancient privilege, and to request its observance on the present occasion; but these traditionary rights were treated by Wentworth with such contempt and acrimony, that the Earl was glad to excuse his confidence by an apology. * The deputy's management of the elections at first experienced some opposition; but, after he had fined one refractory sheriff two hundred pounds, and put another in his place, he soon found resistance converted into submission and obedience. †

That commanding and peremptory tone, which had produced so effectual an impression on the council, proved equally successful in the parliament. Having opened the session with a pomp calculated to astonish and abash the vulgar, he informed the houses of his majesty's pleasure that two sessions should be held; of which the first, according to the natural order, should be devoted to the sovereign, and the second to the subject. "In demanding supplies, I only require you to provide for your own safety; I expect, therefore, your contributions will be both liberal and permanent: for it is far below the dignity of my master to come at every year's end, with his hat in his hand, to in-

Speech to Parliament, July 1634.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 246. † Ibid. p. 270.

treat that you would be pleased to preserve yourselves." He assured them that if they expected constant protection without contributing towards it, they looked for more than had ever been the portion of a conquered kingdom. He warned them against disobedience by the fate of the English parliament; and concluded with an explicit intimation that future reward or punishment would certainly be dealt out according to their conduct. *

Management of the Commons in the first Session.

This speech, delivered with a loud voice and vehement gestures, was in public applauded for its eloquence, and in private dreaded for its vigour. † Confiding in the success of his plans, Wentworth had resolved to demand from the Commons the extraordinary grant of six subsidies; and had procured the reluctant assent of the council to this exorbitant requisition. ‡ This proposition he caused to be introduced into the house on the day immediately subsequent to their assembling; and took the parties by surprise, before any plan of opposition could be arranged. Ignorant of each other's sentiments, Catholics and Protestants strove to distinguish themselves by their loyal devotion. The six subsidies, voted unconditionally, were rendered payable in four years; and entrusted to the discretion of the lord deputy, accompanied only

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 287—290. † Ibid. p. 273.
‡ Ibid. p. 259.

with a humble request that he would be pleased to employ one portion in discharging the public debts, and another in buying in pensions and rents for the amelioration of the revenue. * All parties united in testifying their distinguished respect for their governor. Sir Robert Talbot, one of the members, having, in the ardour of debate, been betrayed into some unguarded reflections on Wentworth's conduct, he was instantly expelled, and committed to custody, till he should, on his knees, implore pardon of the lord deputy. †

Of the Lords.

While the Commons were thus passing votes full of zeal and loyalty, the Lords exhibited very different sentiments. Disregarding Wentworth's distribution of the sessions, they took into consideration the redress of grievances, the confirmation of the "graces," the enactment of various salutary regulations; and even proceeded to draw up certain acts to be transmitted to England for his majesty's approbation. Wentworth, secure of the Commons, took no notice of these impotent proceedings, till the money bills were passed, and the term appointed for the session about to expire. He then, by a formal protest, warned the lords of the irregularity of their proceedings; pointed out their violation of the law of Poynings; and assert-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 277, 279.

† Comm. Journals, Vol. I. p. 116. Leland, Vol. III. p. 18.

ed the exclusive right of the deputy and council to frame and transmit laws to England.*

The triumphant manner in which Wentworth conducted this session, impressed the English court with surprise and admiration. While they found it so difficult to govern a people habituated to subordination, or to move the liberality of a parliament accustomed to considerable grants; they saw Wentworth exact implicit submission from a nation hitherto noted for turbulence, and draw large sums from a parliament which now for the first time granted a subsidy.† The Irish clergy, though strongly tinctured with puritanism, had contended in zeal with the laity; for the convocation, which sat along with the parliament, had granted eight subsidies.

In the second Session.

The part, however, which still remained to be acted, appeared replete with difficulty. The people had been liberal, on the faith that the king would be generous; and it seemed necessary both for his dignity, and for the preservation of tranquillity, that this confidence should not be disappointed. But Wentworth, trusting to that boldness and decision which hitherto proved so successful, resolved to gratify his sovereign, whatever might become of the popular humours. With a devotion most acceptable to Charles, he wrote to

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 279. † Ibid. p. 307.

him that he and the council would take on themselves the whole blame of refusing, while the whole merit of granting should be given to his majesty.* With regard to the "graces", not fit to be passed into laws, he would boldly state that he had not thought proper to transmit them among the propositions for his majesty's approbation; † and, without entering into further explanations, would simply inform them that this was done for great and weighty reasons of state. ‡ The plan was hazardous, for the "graces" to be denied were those of which the Irish were most particularly desirous. One "grace" was to prevent the inquiries into defective titles from being carried beyond a period of sixty years; and another was to guarantee the proprietors of Connaught against some dubious claims of the crown: but as these provisions would

* Wentworth to the King, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 328, 339.

† The law of Poynings, by which the parliament was prevented from entering on any discussion without this previous form, was the circumstance to which Wentworth trusted for the prevention of all troublesome opposition to his plans. With this rein in his hand, he felt no alarm at turning the attention of the parliament to the "graces," as he expresses by an apposite figure in a letter to Secretary Coke: "For my own part, I see not any hazard in it, considering that we have this lyme hound in our power, still to take off when we please, which is not so easy with your parliament of England, where sometimes they hunt loose, forth of command, chuse and give over their own game as they list themselves." Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 305.

‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 338.

have dried up a source from which the king expected to enrich himself and his courtiers, they were on no account to be granted. *

December 1634. The same arts, however, which ruled the first session, proved effectual in the second. In his opening speech, Wentworth resolutely avowed that he had refused to transmit certain graces to England, and asserted his right to do so by the law of Poynings. He explained to the parliament, that, by this statute, the consent of the deputy and council was as necessary to a law in Ireland, as the sanction of the parliament was in England. † The members heard in silence what they feared to contradict; and Wentworth, in his next dispatch, could boast to the king, that the obnoxious graces were lulled asleep for ever. ‡

In the course of the session, the Catholics, who had suffered most by the refusal of the "graces," began to show their discontent, in the House of Commons, by opposing some bills introduced by the deputy. As the Protestants, on whom he now depended, had lost several questions by their negligent attendance, he resolved to make a final trial of strength; and, if unsuccessful, to conclude the session by an immediate prorogation. But the critical question, which concerned the expulsion of

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 320, 321.
† Ibid. p. 345. ‡ Ibid. p. 341.

a refractory Catholic, was carried triumphantly in his favour; and he was afterwards enabled, without opposition, to enact such regulations as he deemed expedient. *

The lords he not only restrained from such discussions as they had hazarded in the last session, but abridged in their authority by new deductions from the law of Poynings. One Sir Vincent Gookin had arraigned the vices of his countrymen in a libel so acrimonious, as to excite the indignation of all ranks; and the parliament, entering into the general resentment, resolved to bring him to punishment by impeachment before the lords. Here, however, Wentworth interposed. He censured the offender, applauded their intentions; but reminded them that, by the law of Poynings, they were precluded from acts of judicature, as well as of legislation, unless when authorized by the deputy and council. The importance of the concession, thus wrested from the lords, was well understood in England, where impeachments had occasioned such frequent uneasiness to the court. In his next dispatch, Wentworth congratulated his majesty on this acquisition: and, in answer, received the king's warm approbation of his prudent foresight, and an order to try the offender in the Castle Chamber. †

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 350, 351. † Ibid. p. 349.

Success. With a still greater stretch of authority, but with equal facility, he silenced some opposition to his measures which arose in the convocation; and, at the close of the session, he found himself the uncontrolled disposer of the destinies of Ireland. *

Exultation. Elated with the unexampled success of all his measures, he justly boasted, in his dispatches, of the important services which he had rendered to the crown. He spoke of vexatious embarrassments succeeded by an ample revenue; of importunate demands superseded by an unlimited prerogative. He declared that if his majesty was hereafter disappointed of any reasonable desire in Ireland, it might justly be laid to the charge of the deputy: "for now," said he, "*the king is as absolute here as any prince in the whole world can be.*" †

His application for an Earldom. The great acquisitions, which he had so rapidly made for the crown, emboldened Wentworth to aspire to some of the sovereign's rewards. An earldom had, in his eyes, peculiar charms; and he ventured to express his desire to the king. This distinction, he said, while it added dignity to his person, would greatly assist his future usefulness, by affording an equivocal proof of his majesty's approbation and favour. ‡ But Charles was by no means so inclined to grant this request as the suitor

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 343. † Ibid. p. 344.
‡ Wentworth to the King, Strafford's Letters. Vol. I. p. 301.

expected. He had indeed been very lavish in his commendations of the deputy, and must have felt all the importance of his services; but he had no longer the task of gaining over an opponent: Wentworth, wholly disjoined from the opposition, was now irrevocably devoted to the court. He had, it was true, conferred on the crown benefits which even exceeded expectation: but his administration was only begun; still greater services were to be expected from him; and it might not be impolitic for the sovereign to retain in his hands an incentive which appeared so alluring to the ambition of his minister.

There were yet other reasons for receiving the application of Wentworth with coldness. Charles, like other princes of the Stuart race, was ill fitted to refuse the demands of his courtiers, many of whom looked to the Irish establishment as a mine of patronage. Wentworth, before entering on the government, had stipulated that no such grant should be made without his concurrence. Charles, unable to refuse such grants altogether, had made them conditionally, and, in his letters to Wentworth, desired him to concede or refuse them, as the good of the service required; "yet so too," added he, "as I may have thanks howsoever; that if there be any thing to be denied, you may do it, not I." * This ungracious office, repeatedly

* King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 140.

urged with more earnestness than delicacy, * Wentworth undertook with the most loyal devotion; † and having, moreover, interfered to restrain both parties in regard to the questionable titles, he had accumulated on himself a load of displeasure, both from the English courtiers and the Irish people. By conferring on this minister any marked distinction, Charles would seem to approve every part of his conduct, his imperious speeches, his harsh refusals: and thus draw on himself a portion of that odium which he was so solicitous to avoid. His reply to Wentworth's application obscurely intimated these sentiments. He thanked him for taking on himself the refusal of the graces; he assured him he was not displeased at his request, since noble minds are always accompanied with lawful ambition; but he hoped that he would patiently wait the time of favour, and allow him to do all things in his own manner. ‡

Refusal.

This refusal ill corresponded with the estimate which Wentworth had formed of his deserts. While he submissively thanked the king for his gracious reply, § he could not refrain from expressing his chagrin in a letter to Lord Cottington, his colleague in administration. His application for the earldom was indeed a secret lodged in his own

* King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 159, 160.
† Ibid. p. 165. ‡ Ibid. p. 332. § Ibid. p. 341.

breast; but he dwelt on his expences, his difficulties, his need of the royal protection and countenance. "Yet I am resolved," said he, "to complain of nothing: I have been something unprosperous, slowly heard, and as coldly answered." *

Thwarted in his wish to continue the Parliament.

The apprehensions of Charles also disappointed him in a favourite part of his policy. By great exertion and consummate address, he had been enabled to procure a parliament, balanced as he desired, and completely subservient to his wishes. He understood the value of such an instrument in procuring a ready submission to his measures; and a change of circumstances might prevent his obtaining a new representation equally desirable. These considerations he strongly represented to the king, earnestly requesting that he might be allowed to defer the dissolution of the Parliament, and continue it by prorogation. † But with this request Charles could not prevail on himself to comply. He had found his English Parliaments always mild and temperate at the outset, but wrought up to obstinacy and rage before their close. Dreading for Ireland a catastrophe which he had been unable to avert in England, he urged Wentworth to get rid of this formidable assembly, while the members retained their good humour. "My rea-

* King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 354.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 353.

sons," said he, "are grounded on my experience of parliaments here: they are of the nature of cats, they ever grow curst with age; so that if ye will have good of them, put them off handsomely when they come to any age, for young ones are ever most tractable." *

His measures for conformity.

Notwithstanding these disappointments, Wentworth persisted in giving new proofs of his zeal and devotion. Among other schemes for consolidating the power of the sovereign, he conceived the difficult one of reducing all the people of Ireland to a conformity in religion. Theological differences were, he saw, the chief cause of their internal dissentions; priests and Jesuits the active promoters of sedition; † their followers were the principal opposers of subordination and improvement; from all which he concluded, that "the introduction of conformity was by far the greatest service which, in that kingdom, could be rendered to the crown." ‡ In these sentiments he was confirmed by Archbishop Laud, who did not cease urging him to go *thorough and thorough* with the pious work. §

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* King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 365.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 431. ‡ Ibid. p. 367.

§ Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 111, 156, 329. Laud was no less eager for the application of his favourite maxim in the state than in the church. "For the state," writes he to Wentworth, "I am absolutely for *thorough*; but I see both thick and thin

The end which Wentworth pursued was unfortunately unattainable, but his means were far more rational than those usually adopted by projectors of conformity. Amidst the public disorders, many of the churches had fallen to ruin; the incomes of the clergy were impaired by long leases and fraudulent appropriations of their lands; and, as no inducement was held out to men of education and character to follow the church, the ignorance and profligacy of numbers of the clergy corresponded with their poverty. To remedy these evils was, in Wentworth's opinion, the first and most indispensable step towards conformity.* "To attempt it," said he, "before the decays of the material churches be repaired, and an able clergy provided, that so there may be wherewith to receive, instruct, and keep the people, were as a man going to warfare without ammunition or arms." † With views equally rational, he proposed to introduce civilization and sound religion by watching over the education of youth. He took measures to prevent the children of Catholics from being sent to foreign convents for their education; he endeavoured to procure throughout the island the erection of Protestant schools, with proper endowments, and able

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stays somebody, where I conceive it should not; and it is impossible for me to go *thorough* alone."

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 172. † Ibid. p. 187.

teachers; and while he thus provided for the instruction of the young, he attempted to remedy the neglect of the old, by vigorous penalties against non-residence. * Penal statutes, as a means of conversion, he estimated at their just value; for he declared fines on nonconformity to be "an engine rather to draw money out of men's pockets, than to raise a right belief in their hearts." † All precipitate attempts to enforce conformity he reprobated; and resolutely opposed the violent measures which the bishops meditated against Catholic recusants. ‡

In the execution of his schemes for the church, Wentworth repeatedly found it necessary to employ that brief and peremptory procedure which had already proved so effectual in Ireland. Those who had engrossed the lands and tithes of the church were unwilling to restore them; the common law protected the possessors of long leases; and the incumbent clergy were eager to enrich their relatives by such leases at the expence of their successors. But Wentworth proceeded boldly, in the name and with the authority of the king. He removed the decision of ecclesiastical rights from the courts of common law to the Castle Chamber; he compelled the Earl of Cork, so conspicu-

* Strafford's Letters, p. 393. Vol. II. p. 7. † Ibid. p. 39.
‡ Ibid. Vol. I. p. 75, 172. Vol. II. p. 39.

ous for his rank and influence, to restore an annual revenue of two thousand pounds, which had been obtained from the church; and when he understood that the Bishop of Killala was making underhand bargains to defraud his see, he sent for him into his presence, and told him sternly, that he deserved to have his surplice pulled over his ears, and to be turned out on a stipend of four nobles a-year. By this resolute behaviour, he procured a speedy restoration of lands and tithes, and a ready obedience to the commission now issued for the repair of churches. *

His next endeavour was, in conformity with the desire of Laud, to introduce a strict uniformity among all Protestants. The same ecclesiastical disputes, which divided the people of England into churchmen and puritans, had agitated the Protestants of Ireland. Some were willing to retain the rites and ceremonies of the English church, while others pressed for a farther reform. Archbishop Usher, a man of uncommon moderation and virtue, zealously applied himself to devise a remedy for these evils; and succeeded in drawing up a list of articles which were received almost unanimously. But the canons of the Irish church, as it was now called, were far from acceptable to Laud. They re-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 151, 156, 171, 380.

ceded from popery as much as he had approached to it; and they tended to withdraw a whole kingdom from its immediate dependence on the metropolitan of England. Determined to supersede these articles by the canons of the English church, Wentworth applied to Usher; and that meek prelate, averse to all contention, agreed, not only to renounce his own work, but to use his influence for the same purpose with the convocation. When the question was proposed before that assembly, the bishops seemed willing to gratify the lord deputy by compliance; but the lower house, strongly attached to their own canons, appointed a committee to discuss the articles submitted to their acceptance, and appeared resolved to admit only such of them as corresponded with their own opinions. Wentworth lost no time in disconcerting this opposition: he commanded the chairman of the committee to deliver up to him the book with their proceedings; and gave orders that no report should be made. He next notified to the convocation that they must cease to mention the Irish canons: and while he permitted the question to be put only on the English articles, he insisted that the members should express their assent or dissent by a simple vote, without presuming to enter on any discussion. The clergy, confounded by this imperious proceeding, received the mandates of their go-

vernor in silent submission; and only one dissenting voice was heard to assert their independence.*

To gratify Laud, Wentworth engaged in some still more gratuitous contests. Among his pious researches, Laud had discovered that the communion table, which was usually placed in the most convenient part of the church, ought, according to the Romish form, to be invariably situated at the east end of the chancel, and known by the name of the altar. Unluckily, in the cathedral of Dublin, the family monument of the Earl of Cork happened to occupy this devoted spot. Laud, informed of this, remonstrated against the profanation; the Earl defended the repository of his ancestors; and the task of asserting the cause of the church ultimately fell to the vigour of Wentworth.†

But his most noted departure from his usual prudence in matters of religion, was the introduction of the court of high commission, whose oppressive and impolitic severities in England had called forth his own remonstrances.‡ The objects

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 343, 344. Wentworth, in relating these circumstances to Laud, humorously adverts to the clamour which these proceedings would excite in England. "I am not ignorant," says he, "that my stirring herein will be strangely reported, and censured on that side; and how I shall be able to sustain myself against your Prynnes, and Pims, and Bens, with the rest of that generation of odd names and natures, the Lord knows."

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 211, &c.

‡ Ibid. Vol. II. p. 159.

which he proposed by this innovation were political as well as religious; to watch over the respectability and usefulness of the clergy; to reform and support the ecclesiastical courts; to bring the people to a conformity of religion, and "in the way to all these, raise, perhaps, a good revenue to the crown." * Nor did this dangerous engine produce pernicious effects while under his vigilant control; and Wentworth was enabled to make the proud and singular boast that, during his government in Ireland, "not the hair of a man's head was touched for the free exercise of his conscience." †

Introduction of the English laws.

Whatever might be the effect of introducing the religion of England, the introduction of English law was a benefit not to be disputed. By the act of Poynings, all the English statutes, to the time of Henry the Seventh, had been established in Ireland; Wentworth now procured the adoption of all subsequent acts, with the exception of a few penal statutes, which were deemed inexpedient. ‡ Yet, even in the administration of justice, he kept in view his grand objects, the power and profit of the crown. At first he found frequent occasion to complain of the stubborn independence of the courts of common law, and to remove causes from

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 187.

† Ibid. Vol. II. p. 112. ‡ Ibid. p. 18. Radcliffe's Essay.

their jurisdiction to his Castle Chamber:* but at length he was able to establish a complete control over the legal officers;† and could boast to the king, "that the ministers of justice were now contained in proper subordination to the crown; that they ministered wholly to uphold the sovereignty; that they carried a direct aspect upon the prerogative of his majesty; and squinted not aside upon the vulgar and vain opinions of the populace."‡

Amelioration of the military establishment.

The military establishment of Ireland engaged the particular attention of Wentworth. He found the troops without clothes, without arms, without ammunition; a terror to the inhabitants, only from their licentiousness; and equally deficient in numbers and discipline. By indefatigable exertion, all these defects were speedily remedied. The regi-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 202. When he demanded for himself and his privy-council the power of deciding causes between private parties, he said, "I know very well the common lawyers will be passionately against it, who are wont to put such a prejudice on all other professions, as if none were to be trusted, or capable to administer justice but themselves. But how well this suits with monarchy, when they monopolize all to be governed by their year books, you in England have a costly experience: and I am sure his majesty's absolute power is not weaker in this kingdom, where hitherto the deputy and council have had a stroke with them."

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 173. "I know no reason," writes he to Laud, "why you may not as well rule the common lawyers in England as I do here: and yet that I do, and will do in all that concerns my master's service, at the peril of my head."

‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 18.

ments of foot were completed; the cavalry, the most efficient troops against internal commotions, were greatly augmented: and Ireland, for the first time since the days of Elizabeth, beheld an army well appointed and marshalled, equal either to its protection or its subjugation. On their marches through the country, the soldiery, who had hitherto resembled troops ravaging an enemy's territory, now paid for every thing; demeaned themselves with sobriety; and, instead of being feared and detested, were welcomed by the inhabitants as friends. With a diligence rarely found in a chief exclusively occupied with military affairs, Wentworth could boast that he had visited the whole army, and inspected every individual in it. He could report that he was always attended by a troop, raised and accoutred at his own charge; that he was ready, at a moment's warning, to mount, and by a sudden chastisement, to repress every symptom of commotion. *

Wentworth seems to have understood far better than the king, how essential a disciplined force was to the support of an unlimited monarchy. He repeatedly urged the necessity of continuing to augment the Irish army; he represented it as an excellent minister and assistant in the execution of the king's commands, as the great peace-maker be-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 96, 202, Vol. II. p. 18, 198.

tween the British and the natives, between the Catholics and the Protestants, and the chief security of those new settlers from whom his majesty anticipated such advantages. A nursery of soldiers ought evidently to be provided in some part of his majesty's dominions; and Ireland was, in his opinion, the most proper quarter for it. *

Expedients for improving the revenue.

But the instrument by which all advantages for the crown were to be consolidated, was a permanent revenue; and for the attainment of this object, the lord deputy exhausted all his talents and industry. In these days, when taxation is so enormous, and money so reduced in value, one cannot forbear a smile on investigating the financial statements of our ancestors. When Wentworth undertook the government of Ireland, the revenue, always anticipated, was under eighty-five thousand pounds; and, notwithstanding the voluntary contribution, still fell short of the annual expenditure. † Towards the relief of these embarrassments, the parliament, as we have seen, was induced to grant six subsidies, each of which Wentworth computed at thirty thousand pounds. But, as no land-tax had hitherto been levied in Ireland, it was necessary to make an assessment; and the deputy accordingly appointed commissioners to make a fair valuation

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 96, 202, Vol. II. p. 18, 198.
† Ibid. Vol. I. p. 190.

of the landed property of the island. The commons, however, dreading discoveries which would greatly advance the rate of their contributions, hastened to request of the deputy, that they might be allowed to assess themselves, and that he would accept forty thousand pounds in lieu of each subsidy. To this proposal, which so far surpassed his expectations, Wentworth procured some additions; and, on including the assessments of the nobility and clergy, he found that each subsidy amounted to fifty thousand pounds. *

The customs.

Other plans for the permanent increase of the revenue were pursued by Wentworth. Under his diligent superintendence, the produce of the customs rose, in four years, from twelve thousand pounds a year to forty thousand, and were still in a state of rapid advancement. † This amelioration proceeded in part from an improved method of collection, ‡ but more from the encouragement which he afforded to trade. By arming proper vessels for the protection of the coasts, he put an end to the piracies which had extended to the very harbours of the island: § and the national com-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 307, 400.

† Ibid. Vol. II. p. 137. ‡ Ibid. Vol. I. p. 521.

§ It was, at that period, a new and enlightened advice of Wentworth to the king, "that he should suffer no act of hostility to be committed on any merchant or his goods in the Irish Channel, but that he should, in all his treaties with foreign powers cause it to

merce and shipping, freed from these dangers, soon experienced an extraordinary increase.* The traffic of Ireland laboured under many disadvantages, from the absurd regulations of the English government. To favour a monopoly of soap-makers, the exportation of Irish tallow was prohibited; that of wool, to gratify the English growers. A heavy duty on the importation of coals from England operated as an obstacle to the increase of the towns and manufactures of Ireland; there existed a tax on live cattle exported from Ireland, and another on horses and mares imported from England. Against these vexatious impositions, Wentworth strenuously remonstrated; and while he procured the abolition of some, and the mitigation of others, he founded lasting advantages to the crown in the improvement of Ireland.†

Some of his financial measures were, it must be admitted, less beneficial to the country. He rendered a licence necessary for retailing tobacco, and was enabled to farm the privilege for an annual

Sale of tobacco.

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be respected as the greatest of his majesty's ports." Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 19.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 67, 90, 106. Vol. II. p. 18. All the Irish trade, even in the Channel, and between the ports of the island, with the exception of the coal trade, had hitherto been carried on in Dutch bottoms.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 202, 308, 393, Vol. II. p. 19, 20, 89.

rent of seven, and finally of twelve thousand pounds.* A tax which he proposed on brewing is entitled to notice, only as intended to pave the way for the gradual introduction of the excise, an impost which, at that period, excited peculiar dislike and apprehension. †

Statutes of Wills and Uses.

But the introduction of the statutes of Wills and Uses might be considered an equal benefit to the crown and the subject. Means had been found to disappoint the king, by fraudulent conveyances of those feudal aids which were still held legal; and by the same arts infinite confusion had been introduced into the tenure of property. Widows were deprived of their jointures, and heirs of their inheritances, without knowing whom to sue for the recovery of their rights. By means of certain statutes, which Wentworth with difficulty induced the parliament to enact, these disorders were remedied, and the king's fines, in the Court of Wards, received an increase of ten thousand pounds a year. ‡

By such expedients the embarrassments of the treasury were quickly removed, all anticipations terminated, all the charges of government paid to a day; and, in the fifth year of his administration, Wentworth could boast that the annual revenue

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 135. † Ibid. Vol. I. p. 192.
‡ Ibid. p. 351, Vol. II. p. 19.

bid fair to exceed the expenditure by sixty thousand pounds. *

There were other projects of Wentworth for the improvement of the revenue and the country, some of which proved abortive, and others productive only of remote advantage. To remedy the excessive scarcity of coin, which caused endless embarrassments to commerce, he united with the Irish parliament in a petition for the erection of a mint in Ireland; but, though the king readily granted the request, such were the delays interposed by the officers of the English mint, who dreaded a diminution of their emoluments, that the repeated representations of the lord deputy were hardly able to give effect to the measure during his administration. † He procured workmen from England to make trial in different parts of the island, whether saltpetre might not be procured in sufficient quantities to form an article of commerce; ‡ and some attempts led him to believe that he might work the silver mines and marble quarries to advantage. §

Trade with Spain.

Far more extensive, however, was the project which he formed of opening a victualling trade between Ireland and Spain. Rising superior to those apprehensions of the Spanish power, which

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 19.

† Ibid. Vol. I. p. 366, 386, 405, Vol. II. p. 42, 133, 151.

‡ Ibid. Vol. II. p. 12, 44, 79. § Ibid. Vol. I. p. 174, 340.

were not generally dispelled even at a later period, he perceived that the commodities of the one kingdom corresponded admirably with the wants of the other, and called for a speedy extension of their commercial intercourse. He declared it as his opinion, that the reciprocal interests of Spain and the British empire corresponded better than those of any two nations in Europe; he urged the king to cultivate a good understanding with that power; he endeavoured to promote the same object by his private connections; and he had even the industry to draw up, from information communicated by his commercial agents, a statement of the nature and quantity of the commodities which each port in Spain could either receive from Ireland, or give in return. The great annual fleets to the colonies, which were often detained in the Spanish harbours from want of provisions, could, he observed, be supplied far more conveniently and cheaply from Ireland than from any other country of Europe; and in this trade he foresaw an inexhaustible source of national riches. *

The linen manufacture.

But the scheme from which the most permanent benefits have accrued to Ireland was the establishment of the linen manufacture. When he first undertook the government of that country, Wentworth learnt, from his inquiries into the state of

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 93, 103, 299, &c.

the island, that no article for export was manufactured there, unless a small quantity of coarse woollen yarn. Unwilling, by encouraging this branch, to interfere with the staple of England, he formed the project of introducing the general cultivation of flax, and directing the industry of the natives to the manufacture of linen. At his own expence he imported and sowed a quantity of superior flax-seed; and, the crop succeeding to his expectation, he, next year, expended a thousand pounds for the same purpose, erected several looms, procured workmen from France and Flanders, and at length was enabled to ship for Spain, at his own risk, the first investment of linen ever exported from Ireland.* Exulting in the success of this favourite scheme, he foretold that it would prove the greatest means of enrichment which Ireland had ever enjoyed; † and his sagacity is amply attested by the industry and wealth which the linen manufacture continues to diffuse over that portion of the empire.

The monopoly of salt.

If it was fortunate for Ireland that this enterprise succeeded, it was equally fortunate that another of his plans proved abortive. He had laid it down as a maxim, "that a governor of that island, to serve the king completely, ought not

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 93, Vol. II. 19, 109.

† Ibid. Vol. I. p. 473.

only to promote the prosperity of its inhabitants, but to render them so dependent on the crown, as not even to be able to subsist without its good pleasure." * By the substitution of the linen for the woollen manufacture, he considered this object as in some degree effected; as the Irish, on a quarrel with England, might be deprived of woollen cloth, an article of the first necessity. † But as their salt, without which they could neither carry on their victualling trade, nor cure their ordinary provisions, was either manufactured by patentees, or imported from abroad, it occurred to him that the king, by monopolizing the sale of this article, would both obtain a large increase of revenue, and reduce the Irish to complete dependence. ‡ Were the internal manufacture of the article, as he proposed, abolished, it would be difficult to defraud the king's revenue by smuggling a commodity so bulky, and so perishable at sea. This expedient, combined with the prohibition of the woollen manufacture, would reduce the Irish to entire dependence, as it would at all times be in his majesty's power to deprive tham of food and clothing. The revenue would be greatly benefited, since salt was an article which the people must of necessity purchase at any expence, and the king might, at plea-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 93. † Ibid.
‡ Ibid. p. 93. 182.

sure, enhance the price. He instanced the profit and ascendancy which the King of France derived from the *gabelle*: and to show his firm confidence in the success of the project, he offered immediately to farm the monopoly at six thousand pounds a year. * These arguments, however, could not induce the court to risk the odium of such a measure; and Wentworth has derived from his proposal only the reputation of having conceived a plan which has uniformly given at least a temporary strength to despotic governments. †

The discovery of defective titles.

The tranquillity of Ireland was unfortunately interrupted by the bold measures of Wentworth to increase the royal demesnes by the discovery of defective titles. By researches among old records, it was found that the whole province of Connaught, on the forfeiture of its Irish chieftain, had come, at a distant period, into the possession of the crown. It had, indeed, been all granted away, at

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 192.

† The only encouragement which Wentworth seems to have obtained from the court in this scheme, is a letter from the Lord Treasurer, advising him, "if he hears no more of the salt business, to take his own way, and not delay the king's service." Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 333. But, as the Lord Treasurer, from being his most zealous patron, was now become his enemy, on account of Wentworth's greater intimacy with Laud, it is not improbable that this unofficial advice might be given with no good intentions. At least the Lord Deputy appears to have prosecuted the scheme no farther. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 340.

different times, by formal patents from the sovereign; but the ingenuity of the court lawyers soon discovered that some flaw or other might be found in all these titles. During the former reign, when James was inflamed with an immoderate desire for extended settlements, some measures of this nature had been suggested; but it had appeared too hazardous an attempt to dispossess a fourth part of the proprietors of Ireland on formal quibbles, and obsolete pretensions. By the *graces*, which had received the sanction of Charles, it was expressly stipulated that the titles of the Connaught landholders should be recognised as valid; and they had thus every assurance of their estates, which deeds of law, and the word of a monarch, could bestow. But Wentworth, while he prevented the grace respecting Connaught from passing into a law, engaged to Charles that he would devise some means or other to reduce that province into the possession of the crown; * and being now furnished by the lawyers with the pretext which he desired, he was not to be deterred by popular clamour from rendering an acceptable service to the monarch.

He first proceeded to the county of Roscommon, and summoned a jury of such proprietors as were able to pay a large fine to the crown, if they should

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 342.

happen to prove refractory.* He informed them that his appeal to their decision on the present occasion was an act of mere courtesy; that, in a case so clear, his majesty could have recovered by an ordinary process in the Court of Exchequer; that, if they looked to their own interests, they ought to find the king's title, and throw themselves on his bounty; but that, if they rather considered the profit of the crown, they ought stoutly to refuse the demands of justice, and leave his majesty to pursue his course, unembarrassed by the claims of ready obedience. The jury, aware that the threats of Wentworth were not empty words, judged it most prudent to purchase his favour by a ready submission; and the juries afterwards summoned in Mayo and Sligo delivered up their counties with equal alacrity to the crown. Their obedience was rewarded by a proclamation, assuring them that they should be permitted to purchase indefeasible titles by an easy composition.†

Wentworth, however, was informed that he might look to a very different reception in Galway. The inhabitants of that county, composed chiefly

* Wentworth, in his official dispatches, states that he had purposely composed the jury of the principal inhabitants, that "they might answer the king a round fine in the Castle Chamber, in case they should prevaricate." Ibid. p. 442.

† Ibid.

of aboriginal Irish, and adhering, almost without exception, to the Romish religion, were stimulated to the maintenance of their tenures, by their priests, their lawyers, and, above all, by their hereditary governor the Earl of St Alban's and Clanricarde. Undismayed at their reported opposition, Wentworth declared he should rejoice if they afforded his majesty so fair an occasion of augmenting his revenue, and strengthening his authority. * He summoned a jury here on the same principle as in the other counties: but, finding them immoveable by his arguments, or his threats, he resolved to make a striking example of the first resolute opposition which he had encountered. By his own authority he fined the sheriff a thousand pounds, for selecting such an ill-affected jury: he cited the jurors into the Castle Chamber, and fined them four thousand pounds each: and, by his representations at court against the Earl of Clanricarde, made him severely suffer for his obnoxious interference. †

By these imperious proceedings, the lord deputy gave rise to great discontents; ‡ and, in the Earl of Clanricarde, he had incensed a nobleman, known and respected at court, and provided with the means of diffusing the most invidious repre-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 444, 450.
† Ibid. p. 451, 454. ‡ Ibid. p. 504.

sentation of these transactions. Yet, confirmed by fresh assurances of the royal approbation and support,* Wentworth remained undismayed; and the unfortunate violence of his temper quickly aggravated the prejudice which he strove not to allay.

Several harsh and unprecedented stretches of authority by Wentworth and his council had excited severe animadversion. He had been repeatedly threatened with a Felton or Ravaillac;† and even his friend Laud, though so great an admirer of "thorough" exertions of power, began to intimate a wish that an appearance of moderation might be mingled with his vigour.‡ But his friends received a new alarm from the severity of his proceedings against Francis Annesley, Lord Mountnorris. That nobleman held the office of vice-treasurer in Ireland, and had enjoyed the confidence of Wentworth, on his accession to the government. A coolness, however, had arisen between them, and was speedily aggravated into a serious quarrel. The deputy represented to the king some fees and offices of which his antagonist might be deprived, without disadvantage to the service: § and while the vice-treasurer found his emoluments diminished, his resentment was yet

Arbitrary measures

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 465. † Ibid. p. 371, 412.
‡ Ibid. p. 479. § Ibid. p. 392.

more inflamed by an unsuccessful attempt to fix on him the charge of corruption in the exercise of his office.

While this mutual animosity was in a course of daily aggravation, a serious result arose from a trivial incident. As Wentworth sat one day in the presence chamber, during a severe fit of the gout, one of his retinue occasioned him much pain, by accidentally moving a stool against his foot. The incident having been mentioned at the Lord Chancellor's table, one of the guests observed to Lord Mountnorris, who happened to be present, that the offender was his namesake and kinsman. "Perhaps," replied his lordship, "it was done in revenge of the public affront which I have received from the lord deputy; but I have a brother, who would not have taken *such* a revenge."*

April 18, 1635.

Trial of Mountnorris. July 21st.

These unguarded words, when reported by some officious courtiers to Wentworth, appeared in his eyes pregnant with sedition. He privately procured the king's commission to bring his antagonist to trial; but deferred it till a full security added to the severity of his vengeance. At length, without any intimation of his designs, he one evening sent a summons to the principal military officers in Dublin, and among the rest Lord Mountnorris, to

Dec. 12th.

* Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 187. Nalson's Collections, Vol. I. p. 59.

attend him next morning at a council of war. After they had taken their places, the lord deputy, as commander in chief and president, informed the astonished assembly, that he had called them together to receive, at their hands, reparation and justice against Lord Mountnorris. He produced a written statement of the words spoken at the chancellor's table: he proved the allegation by witnesses: he recounted two articles of war, by one of which, disgraceful words spoken of any person in the army were punishable with imprisonment, and with ignominious dismissal from the service; while by the other, death was awarded to any individual, who, by speech or actions, should stir up mutiny, or "impeach obedience to the principal officer." He maintained that the expressions of Mountnorris were amenable to both these laws; and that, as a captain in the service, he was properly brought to the summary justice of a court martial.

In vain was this course of procedure objected to by Lord Mountnorris, who had now risen from the council table, and presented himself in the usual station of the accused. In vain did he urge that he was taken wholly unawares; that he ought to be allowed time to prepare his defence, with the advice of counsel; that words, spoken in the course of conversation, at the distance of several months,

could with difficulty be ascertained; and that he could produce upwards of twenty witnesses to prove that there was nothing malicious or offensive, either in the expressions he had used, or in the mode of uttering them. Wentworth replied, that none of his requisitions could be granted according to the forms of a court martial: that he must simply confess or deny the facts; and that the council must then directly proceed to vote him innocent or guilty of the charge.

The members of the court, though awed by the tone and presence of their governor, revolted from the idea of condemning to death a peer and a member of the government, for so trival an offence. To avoid the capital part of the sentence, they requested that the lord deputy would permit the two charges to be separated: but he sternly replied that they must vote the offender guilty of "both or of none." Even Lord Moore, who had originally given the information, and now appeared as a witness for the prosecution, after having delivered his testimony, was commanded by Wentworth to resume his seat in the court, and judge the man whom he had accused. The council proceeded to deliberate and vote, under the eye of the lord deputy; and their sentence adjudged Mountnorris to be imprisoned, deprived of all his offices, ignominiously dismissed from the army, incapacitated

from ever again serving; and finally, to be shot, or beheaded, at the pleasure of the general. *

The report of a sentence, so cruel and so unjustly obtained, filled the empire with indignation and clamour. Wentworth's friends in London entreated him to furnish them with some satisfactory explanation of reports, to which they could not listen with patience, and which were avouched in a manner they durst not contradict.† The concealment of the charge for so many months; the excessive disproportion of the punishment to the offence; the admission of a witness to sit as judge; the presence and control of the accuser during the whole trial; these were all recounted as incapable of palliation. Even the conduct of Buckingham, the great object of national hatred, was advantageously contrasted with that of Wentworth: it was remembered that at the Isle of Rhé, the duke had merely dismissed from the army some officers who had conspired against him; while Wentworth had caused a colleague in office and a former friend to be sentenced to death for an imprudent expression. ‡

The apologies of the lord deputy only showed a consciousness of guilt. As his principal defence

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 500, 501. Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 187. et seq. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 220, et seq.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 508. ‡ Ibid. p. 510.

he urged that he had been merely passive in the transaction; that he had not voted, nor even suffered his brother to vote; that he had sat uncovered and silent while the council deliberated on their sentence; that he had never intended to put Mountnorris to death, but only to punish his insolence; and that he had united with the members of the court in obtaining a pardon for the capital part of the offence. * His behaviour subsequent to the trial seemed an aggravation of his misconduct. After the sentence was passed, he told Mountnorris, that now, if he chose, he had only to order execution; that he would, however, petition for his life, adding, "that he would sooner lose his hand than Mountnorris should lose his head." † His exultation, indeed, was scarcely limited either by prudence or decency; for he exclaimed before the whole court, that "the sentence was just and noble, and for his part he would not lose his share of the honour of it." ‡

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 498, 499, 505, &c.

† Strafford's Trial, p. 190.

‡ Ibid. p. 195. Lady Mountnorris was a near relative of Wentworth's beloved wife, Arabella Hollis, whose premature death had lately caused him the most bitter affliction. Trusting to the influence of this strong tie, she became an intercessor for her condemned husband, and addressed the following pathetic letter to Wentworth.

"My Lord,

"I beseech your lordship, for the tender mercy of God,

But the most singular part of the transaction remains yet to be mentioned. Wentworth felt the necessity of exerting himself to conciliate the English court, and to procure the offices of Mountnorris for his favourites. To effect the latter, he proposed to distribute six thousand pounds among the principal ministers; * but Lord Cottington, an

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take off your heavy hand from my dear lord; and, for her sake, who is with God, be pleased not to make me and my poor infants miserable, as we must of necessity be by the hurt you do to him. God knows, my lord, I am a distressed poor woman, and know not what to say more, than to beg upon my knees, with my homely prayers and tears, that it will please the Almighty to incline your lordship's heart to mildness towards him: for if your lordship continue my lord in restraint, and lay disgraces upon him, I have too much cause to fear your lordship will bring a speedy end to his life and troubles, and make me and all mine for ever miserable. Good my lord, pardon these woeful lines of a disconsolate creature; and be pleased, for Christ Jesus' sake, to take this my humble suit into your favourable consideration, and to have mercy upon me and mine; and God will, I hope, reward it into the bosom of you, and your sweet children by my kinswoman: and for the memory of her, I beseech your lordship to compassionate the distressed condition of me,

"Your lordship's most humble
"and disconsolate servant,
"JANE MOUNTNORRIS."

This letter, which is inserted in Clarendon's State Papers, Vol. I. p. 449, is there endorsed with these words: "A copy of Lady Mountnorris's letter to the Earl of Strafford, when her husband was in prison, under sentence of death, by martial law; and he was so hard-hearted as to give her no relief."

* According to general report, the distribution was to take place in the following manner:—to Lord Cottington, L.2000; to the

old and dexterous courtier, to whom the business was intrusted, "fell upon the right way," as he informs us; and "gave the money to him who could really do the business, which was the king himself."* The present happened to prove opportune to his majesty, who was then in the act of purchasing an estate; and Wentworth, without delay, received an official letter, authorizing him to dispose of the offices according to his desire.†

Death of Clanricarde and others.

The approbation of the king might silence murmurs within the precincts of the palace, but it was far from suppressing the general expressions of reproach; and these unfortunately met with new excitements. The death of the Earl of Clanricarde, which took place about this time, was attributed to his despondency, arising from the ruin of his influence, and the danger of his fortune by the proceedings in Galway;‡ and the fate of the sheriff of Galway, who died in the prison, to which he had been committed till the payment of his fine, was ascribed to the unjust author of his hardships. The first of these charges, indeed, Wentworth could treat with ridicule; "they might as well,"

Lord Privy Seal, L.1000; to the Marquis of Hamilton, L.1000; and the other L.2000 to the two secretaries. Letter from the Rev. Mr Garrard to Wentworth, in Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 508.

* Letter from Lord Cottington to Wentworth, in Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 511.

† Ibid. p. 512. ‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 492.

says he, "have imputed to me for a crime, his being three score and ten years old." * But the death of the sheriff was not to be thus dismissed, coupled as it was with a false but specious report that Wentworth had refused bail, to the amount of forty thousand pounds, for the brother of Clanricarde. † One exaggeration now succeeded another; and he had the mortification to find it currently believed, that, on occasion of some displeasure, he had actually caned one Esmond, a ship-owner, to death. ‡ Wentworth was exceedingly alive to public opinion: the reports concerning his conduct, which both friends and enemies now brought to his ears, filled him with resentment and anguish; nor could the repeated advices of the king and of Laud, who intreated him to despise accusations which no one durst avow, subdue the anxiety excited by the general murmurs.

He was not, however, of a temper to sink tame-

* Letter from Wentworth to the King, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 492.

† The fate of the sheriff he seems to have viewed with perfect coolness; his only source of regret was the clamour it excited. "I am full of belief," says he in a letter to his friend Wandesford, "that they will lay the charge of Dancy the sheriff's death to me. My arrows are cruel that wound so mortally; but I should be sorry the king should lose his fine." Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 13.

‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 6. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 886.

ly under popular clamour. Resolving to brave those rumours which he could not suppress, and to confound his enemies by the assumed intrepidity of conscious innocence, he requested leave of the king to come over to England. The subordination which he had established, and the dread of his speedy return, would, he trusted, prevent the discontents in Ireland from breaking out into any active opposition; and he hoped to bring back, in open and distinguished marks of royal approbation, an invincible bulwark to his authority.

Appearance at court. May 1636.

His reception at the English court was highly flattering; and when questioned by the king on the state of Ireland, the explanation of his measures was marked by all the address and vigour that he had shown in their execution. In a speech delivered before the king and the committee for Irish affairs, he gave a perspicuous and forcible description of all his principal improvements. He treated separately of the services which he had rendered to the church, to the army, to the revenue, to manufactures and commerce, to the laws and the administration of justice. The former neglect of these departments he contrasted with their present flourishing condition; and augured still greater improvements from a continuance of his auspicious system. He showed his concern for Ireland by certain requisitions for its relief: and in proof of his devotion to his sovereign, he ex-

plained how all his measures tended to increase the revenue and authority of the crown. To divest this exposition of the appearance of presumption, he declared that if he had any merit, it was only that of a willing obedience. "I have been," he added, "a dead instrument in the hands of his majesty, without motion or effect, further than I have been guided by the gracious direction of my sovereign." He then adverted to the many calumnies circulated against him; and lamented "the decayed and backsliding condition of Ireland when committed to his charge," which had rendered an appearance of severity indispensably necessary for his majesty's service. He "acknowledged his manifold infirmities, and his sovereign's great goodness, that had been pleased to pass by them, and to accept of his weak endeavours in the pursuit of his duty." In particular, he owned himself liable to a warmth and choler which he could not at all times temper and govern; yet, by the time some more cold winters had blown upon it, he should, he trusted, be able to master this unruly passion. Meantime, he would watch over it as well as he could; and he humbly intreated his majesty and their lordships to pardon any excesses into which it might unadvisedly and suddenly have led him; a grace which he requested with the more confidence, as the defects of his temper had

hitherto, he thanked God, injured no one but himself. *

The effect of this dexterous discourse corresponded fully to his hopes. The king declared that his conduct required no apology, that no unnecessary severity had been practised, that every thing had been done in the best manner for his service. The lords of the committee loaded him with applause; and all united in exhorting him to perfect the work which he had so successfully begun. Nor was the fame of his meritorious actions, and of his favour with the sovereign, confined to the court: it was quickly diffused over the capital and the kingdom, and his reputation among the partizans of the government became unbounded.

Zealous support of ship-money.

An opportunity immediately occurred of binding the king by new testimonies of his zeal. Among other expedients for raising supplies, without the intervention of parliament, recourse had been had to a new levy under the name of ship-money. The estimated expence of equipping a navy was apportioned among all the counties of England; and, under this pretext, less invidious, it was hoped,

* This account of his reception and discourse at court is given by Wentworth himself in a letter to his confidential friend, Wandesford, to whom he had committed the government of Ireland in his absence. It is inserted in Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 13 to 22. The Irish transactions to which it adverts have all been related in the text.

than either a subsidy or a loan, a general contribution was demanded. * Still, both the necessity of the imposition, and its amount, being left entirely at the discretion of the monarch, the payments were made with great repugnance; and the aversion with which men shrink from rebellion, seemed alone to restrain the nation from resistance. In this state of things, Wentworth, as president of the council of York, was enabled to render an essential service to the court, by procuring the assent of all within his jurisdiction to the contribution. His activity and dexterity were attended with their wonted success; and, while the officers of the revenue, in other parts of the kingdom, levied the imposition amidst murmurs and threats, he could send to the king as favourable accounts from York, as he had formerly transmitted from Ireland. "In pursuit of your commands," said he, "I have effectually, both in public and private, recommended the justice and necessity of the shipping business, and so clearly shown it to be, not only for the honour of the kingdom in general, but for every man's particular safety, that I am most confident the assessment this next year will be universally and cheerfully answered within this jurisdiction." †

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* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 68. † Letter from Wentworth to the King, in Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 26.

New petition for an Earldom.

Amidst this accumulation of services, Wentworth felt increasing uneasiness that there appeared no indication of an intention to acknowledge his zeal by some public mark of royal favour. His exposition of his prosperous labours in Ireland had, indeed, been received with unbounded commendation; but this commendation had been confined to the walls of the council-chamber, and was known to the nation only by unaccredited report. Would it not be said, that if the king really held the services of Wentworth in such high estimation, he would evince it by the usual distinction of a superior title? If this cheap and ordinary reward were withheld, would it not be concluded that the king, though compelled by reasons of state to employ obliging expressions towards the lord deputy, was far from viewing his conduct with unqualified approbation? A superior title, therefore, now appeared to Wentworth, not only an object of gratification, but a necessary safeguard to his authority. Actuated by these considerations, he ventured, for the second time, to approach the king with a humble petition for some public mark of his favour, to refute the malicious insinuations of his enemies, and prove that his majesty disbelieved their calumnies.* Distrusting his own influence, after his former experience, he disclosed this desire of his heart to Laud; and intreated him to concur in

* Letter from Wentworth to the King, in Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 27.

earnestly urging his majesty to confer on him an earldom, or some other public mark of distinction. He represented to the archbishop the impolicy, as well as the hardship, of withholding this testimony of approbation; and assured him, that if he were sent back to Ireland, thus unrequited, it would shake his authority, and injure the public service.*

But the reasons which formerly led Charles to refuse this request were now exceedingly strengthened. Partly in the prosecution of the public service, partly for the gratification of his own violent passions, Wentworth had incurred a great additional load of public reproach, and Charles could perceive, that, whatever odium he removed from his minister, he must necessarily accumulate on himself. The more earnest the solicitation, the more insupportable the load, the less advisable was it for him to interfere. The lord deputy, though extremely sensible to public reproach, was not of a disposition to give way to despondency; and when the immediate preservation of a servant was not in question, it seemed imprudent for the king, in his present circumstances, to incur any odium which it was practicable to avoid. The reply of Charles was, therefore, so pointed and decisive as to bar all hopes of compliance. He assured Wentworth that the cause of his request, if known, would rather encourage than silence his enemies; that their ca-

Refused.

* Wentworth to Laud, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 28.

lumnies would increase with the discovery of his apprehensions, and their attacks become more bold and dangerous when they perceived that they were feared. "The marks of my favour," continued he, "which stop malicious tongues, are neither places nor titles, but the little welcome I give to accusers, and the willing ear I give to my servants. This," added he, "is not to disparage these favours, but to show their proper use, which is not to quell envy, but to reward services. They have truly the effect of rewards, only when conferred by the master without the servant's importunity; and that otherwise men judged them to proceed rather from the servant's wit than the master's favour." With an attempt at pleasantry, ill-calculated to soften his refusal, he concluded thus: "I will end with a rule that may serve for a statesman, a courtier, or a lover,—never make an apology till you be accused." *

Mortification.

A repulse, conveyed in terms so unqualified, seems to have inflicted a deep wound on the mind of Wentworth. In his reply to the king, he dwelt on the intimations concerning his *fears* and *apprehensions;* and reminded his majesty, that, in the service of the crown at least, he had never betrayed timidity. To make the king sensible how ill his rewards corresponded with his merits, he in-

* King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 32.

formed his majesty that his jurisdiction in the northern counties was now so completely reconciled to ship-money, as to be fitted for setting an example to the rest of the kingdom; and he advised, if the south were likely to prove refractory, to send down the first writs for the year to York, where there would be no opposition.*

The chagrin caused to Wentworth by this disappointment often broke out in his subsequent letters. On one occasion, where he urges his majesty to allow the public officers in Ireland a liberal per centage out of certain branches of the public revenue, with a view to quicken their activity, he continues: "Admit me to say, reward well applied is of extreme advantage to the service of kings. It is most certain that not one man of very many serves his master for love, but for his own ends and preferment; and that he is in the rank of the best servants, who can be content to serve his master together with himself. In fine, I am most confident, were your majesty purposed for a while to use the excellent wisdom God hath given you, in the constant, right, and quick application of rewards and punishments, it were a thing most easy for your servants, in a very few years, under your conduct and protection, so to settle all your affairs and dominions, as should render you, not only at

* Wentworth to the King, Vol. II. p. 36.

home, but abroad also, the most powerful king in Christendom." * To his private friends, and to Laud in particular, his expressions of mortification were more undisguised. † In a letter to Mr George Butler he says, that, as to rewards and preferments, he must now look for them in the next world; "for, in good faith, George, all here below are grown wondrous indifferent." ‡

Return to Ireland. November 1633.

With these impressions, Wentworth returned to his government in Ireland. If he had failed to obtain those public marks of distinction, by which he hoped to confound and silence the voice of detraction, he at least found himself armed with ample authority to chastise every opposition to his power, or insult to his feelings. Mountnorris, and all who had appealed from his sentences to the English court, were remitted to his disposal; § and if he could resolve to endure the odium of arbitrary rule, without openly implicating the king, there seemed to be no restraint on the exercise of his power.

Subsequent measures.

His subsequent measures in the government of Ireland were merely a continuation of those already described. The awe inspired by his vigour

* Wentworth to the King, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 41.
† Wentworth to Laud, Ibid. p. 109.
‡ Wentworth to Butler, Ibid. p. 40.
§ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 15.

confirmed the tranquillity it had procured; and under his vigilant eye the infant cultivation, manufactures, and commerce of the country, began to increase and prosper. While the subject enjoyed security, from the entire suppression of internal insurrections and depredations, the royal revenues, arising from produce and consumption, experienced a rapid increase. Nor did Wentworth cease to replenish the exchequer by rigorous inquiries into defective titles. He found means to make out the right of the king to the whole district of Ormond; and the O'Byrnes in Wicklow were obliged to redeem their large possessions from a similar award, by the payment of fifteen thousand pounds to the crown. By such means, of which some were as laudable as others were irreconcileable to justice, he procured an ample supply for the expenditure of his government, without any of those new demands or impositions which might have furnished an occasion to contest his authority. *

Domestic life.

Ambition had not so wholly engrossed the mind of Wentworth, as to render him insensible to the softer passions of domestic life. His attachments, however, were more ardent than fortunate. About three years after the death of his first wife, he married Arabella Hollis, daughter to the Earl of Clare, and sister to the Honourable Denzil Hollis, who

July 1625.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 89, 97, 135, 175.

afterwards distinguished himself on the popular side in the reign of Charles the First, yet received a title from Charles the Second. This lady, of whose beauty and accomplishments contemporary writers speak with admiration, was beloved by her husband with all the characteristic ardour of his disposition. In the course of six years, she brought him two sons and three daughters; but the loss of the younger son, which happened soon after his birth, was followed by the more lamented death of
October 1631. the mother. So violent was the anguish which Wentworth experienced from this unexpected calamity, that his confidential friends remained with him continually for several days and nights, and were even then hardly able to overcome his despair. * Several years afterwards, when the Lady Clare requested that the education of her granddaughters might be committed to her charge, he delivered over those pledges of his tender affection, and recalled the incomparable virtues of their mother, with much sensibility and enthusiasm. †

The tender remembrance of Arabella Hollis did not, however, prevent the growth of another passion in the breast of Wentworth, who was still in the prime of life. Captivated with the charms of Elizabeth Rhodes, the daughter of Sir Godfrey

* Radcliffe's Essay. Ibid. p. 59, 60.

† Wentworth to Lady Clare, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 379.

Rhodes, an English gentleman of considerable rank and fortune, he resolved to make her his wife: and though reluctant to own in public his attachment to a female of inferior family, yet he allowed only a year to elapse, from the death of his former wife, before the private solemnization of his third nuptials. It was not till his arrival in Ireland, whither the lady was conveyed by his friend Radcliffe, at an interval of several months from his own journey, that he openly acknowledged her as his wife. * On this occasion, he thought it necessary to apologise to Laud for a step which might appear imprudent; and, having explained his reasons for the match, he hinted that the prelate would do well to imitate his example. Laud, in reply, wished him and his consort much felicity, and expressed his confidence that the step had been taken after due deliberation: but as to his following the same course, "I must needs," said he, "confess to your lordship, that having been married to a very troublesome and unquiet wife before, I should be ill-advised now, being above sixty, to go marry another of a more wayward and troublesome generation."† Elizabeth Rhodes, however, bore her new dignities with incomparable meekness and humility. Far from acquiring arrogance from her unexpected elevation, she remain-

October 1632.

* Radcliffe's Essay. † Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 125.

ed impressed with an overpowering sense of her husband's superiority, and accounted it a degree of presumption even to approach him with her letters. This lowliness was by no means displeasing to Wentworth, and was repaid by a conduct uniformly condescending and kind. In a letter, where he endeavours to remove the excess of her timidity, he tells her, "it is no presumption for you to write me; the fellowship of marriage ought to produce sentiments of love and equality, rather than any apprehension." *

Recreations. In the earlier part of life, Wentworth had entered freely into the social amusements usual among persons of his rank; but short and uncertain intervals of relaxation were now with difficulty snatched from the pressure of public affairs. Hawking was his favourite field sport, and finding the northern part of Wicklow well adapted to this amusement, he erected there a mansion for his summer residence. It was built of wood, and the expence did not exceed twelve hundred pounds; yet so magnificent did it appear to the rude natives of Wicklow, that, to silence the envy excited by vulgar rumour, he gave out that it was intended for the reception of his majesty, when he should find leisure to enjoy the exercise of hunting in this

* These letters from Wentworth to his wife are copied in the Biographia Britannica from the originals in the Museum Thoresbianum.

part of his dominions. * The games of primero and mayo, at which he played with uncommon skill, he indulged in only during the Christmas festivities, or occasionally after supper, the hour of which corresponded to the fashionable dinner hour of the present age. It was in the interval between this meal and the hours devoted to sleep, that he found his chief period of recreation. He would retire at times with his company to an inner room, and continue there for hours, relating anecdotes with a freedom and pleasantry which surprised those guests who till then had seen him distant, ceremonious, and haughty, amidst his official avocations.

Temperance.

Yet during his most unguarded moments of hilarity, Wentworth never indulged to excess in the pleasures of the table. He never, we are assured, in the course of his life, degraded himself by one instance of intoxication. In Ireland, where excessive drinking was an epidemical vice, he thought it expedient to set a strict example, and, on those public occasions which had often proved a scene of intemperate riot, his rule was to drink only the healths of the king, the queen, and the prince. There was no fault which he accounted more dangerous, or which he reprehended more severely in his servants, than a proneness to intoxication. †

Attention to his private fortune.

Amidst his various plans for the increase of the

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 106. † Radcliffe's Essay.

public revenue, Wentworth did not altogether overlook the improvement of his private fortune. In conjunction with his friend Sir George Radcliffe, he farmed the Irish customs; and, in consequence of their amelioration from the flourishing state of the country, there was derived from them, in a few years, an annual profit of eight thousand pounds, of which two thirds fell to his share. * The monopoly of tobacco, which he also farmed, proved, from the increasing consumption of the article, productive beyond expectation; and the lands in Ireland, which he purchased at an inconsiderable price, became, under proper cultivation, a promising source of wealth. †

Integrity. It deserves to be remarked to his honour, that, with the exception of the tobacco monopoly, none of the means by which he increased his fortune were liable to censure, or even to suspicion. Far from sharing the plunder of the demesnes which he had recovered for the crown, he strenuously exerted himself to prevent their falling a prey to the rapacity of other courtiers. In the exercise of his office, he refused even the customary presents; and the English court was amused with an anecdote of the servant of a person of distinction, who had been sent to him with a present, and who was

* Wentworth to Laud, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 137.
† Ibid. p. 106.

so indignant at an unexpected refusal, that he, in his turn, refused the gratuity of Wentworth. * It was his frequent boast, that he did not come into the service to repair a broken fortune; and that the public had never suffered from his desire to bequeath inordinate wealth to his posterity.

His judgment in the management of his private affairs appears the more conspicuous, when we consider the magnificence of his mode of living. At his own charge he maintained a retinue of fifty attendants, besides his troop of sixty horsemen, which he originally raised and equipped at an expence of six thousand pounds, and which continued to cost him twelve hundred pounds a-year. † His taste for building added considerably to his expenditure. Besides repairing and beautifying his several residences as governor, he erected a palace at Naas in Kildare, for the reception of the king, as he declared, since it appeared to him derogatory to Ireland, that this part of the empire should alone present no accommodations to its sovereign. ‡ Splendour.

In dwelling on the private scenes of Wentworth's life, we are apt to regret that he should ever have quitted a condition where he might have enjoyed

* Secretary Windebank to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 160.

† Wentworth to Cottington, Ibid. p. 128.

‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 106.

respectability without envy. Such a reflection seems often to have recurred to his own mind, amidst the uneasy aspirations of ambition. Even while he exults in the prosperous situation of his government, he adds, "yet I could possess myself with much more satisfaction and repose under my own roof, than with all the preferment and power which the favour of a crown can communicate." * Amidst his most ambitious plans, we find him looking forward to some happier period, when, escaping from the fatigues of office, he should be enabled to deliver himself up wholly to retirement and reflection. "Neither preferments, nor whatsoever else men most esteem in this world, will, I trust, tie me to the importunities of public affairs during my whole life, or so far infatuate my senses as to make me neglect the cares of a future and permanent state." †

Bodily infirmities.

These, however, were only the transient suggestions of bodily sickness or mental depression: Even while he uttered them, he was soliciting new honours, and prosecuting some of his least justifiable enterprises. The agitations of ambition had not only unfitted his mind for tranquillity, but had induced several premature infirmities. During

* Wentworth to Sir Edward Stanhope, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 303.

† Wentworth to Mr George Butler. Ibid. p. 420.

the first years of his administration in Ireland, his extreme solicitude for the accomplishment of his plans had led him to forego all his usual recreations; and his anxiety to gain the approbation of the English court had even tempted him to write all his voluminous dispatches with his own hand. * To such incessant labour of body and mind, his constitution, naturally far from robust, began to prove unequal. By the paroxysms of a gout, become inveterate from neglect of exercise, he was at times confined for months to his apartments; still had he the imprudence to aggravate its pains. Although the posture of writing was peculiarly uneasy to him, he continued to employ his own hand in some parts of his correspondence; and was even carried from bed to write his more secret dispatches. † On his second arrival in Ireland, his gout was aggravated by the re-appearance of the aguish complaints which, at an earlier period of his life, had reduced him to a dangerous debility. While he laboured under severe pain, accompanied with an intermittent pulse, faint sweats, and depression of spirits, he began to prognosticate "that no long life awaited him here below." ‡

The effects of his bodily infirmities were aggravated by many vexations in the discharge of his Vexations,

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 203.

† Ibid. p. 371, 420, Vol. II. p. 256. ‡ Ibid. p. 143, 145.

office. Occasionally he found that neither the explicit regulations which he had stipulated, nor his perpetual labours for the benefit of the crown, could prevent the king from gratifying importunate courtiers at the price of his mortification. Appointments in the army had always been at the disposal of the lord deputy, who also acted as commander-in-chief; but Wentworth saw the command of one of his companies snatched from a friend to whom he had granted it, and given to the dependent of a rival courtier; though he had earnestly solicited both the king and the ministers, that he might be spared an affront so derogatory to his dignity, and so dangerous to his utility. * He had expressly stipulated that no grant should be made on the Irish establishment without his knowledge and concurrence; yet he found himself unexpectedly assailed by authorized demands on the public treasury; † and what galled him more deeply than all, the young Earl of Clanricarde, by his influence at court, and unknown to Wentworth, succeeded in procuring an indemnity for his losses in Galway. ‡ The king, it was whispered, beheld his receipts from the customs with an eye of jealousy; and Lord Holland, who had ready access to the

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 128, 138, 142, 144.

† Wentworth to Windebank, Ibid. Vol. II. p. 201.

‡ Wentworth to the King, Ibid. p. 83.

ear of the queen, even presumed to circulate that he was liable to accesses of lunacy. * Endeavours were used to produce a breach between him and Laud; † and so deeply did his intimacy with that prelate offend his early patron the Lord Treasurer, that Wentworth looked on the death of the latter as a deliverance from the most dangerous of his adversaries. ‡

To such contradictions and calumnies, Wentworth betrayed an aching sensibility, and his mind was kept in perpetual distraction. He was indeed armed with every power to punish the malignant within his own jurisdiction; and his vigorous chastisements received his majesty's fullest approbation. § But he was informed that more virulent libels were circulated against him in England, beyond his reach; and his feelings were tormented by hints, that these attacks gained ground from his majesty's refusal to countenance him by some public mark of approbation. ‖ Unable to endure

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* Wentworth to the King, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 111, 127, 284.

† Ibid. p. 133, 265. ‡ Ibid. Vol. I. p. 411.

§ Laud to Wentworth, Ibid. Vol. II. p. 103. "The punishment of impertinent, unjust, clamorous persons, his majesty liketh well, that thereby you may ease both him and yourself."

‖ Laud to Wentworth, Ibid. Vol. II. p. 42. Laud, in giving this hint, ironically adds, "but the thoughts of princes be deeper than other men's."

this any longer, Wentworth drew up a list of the calumnies circulated against him, which he transmitted to Laud, for the decision of the king.* The archbishop, though extremely irritable and impatient of censure, was yet shocked at a weakness which tended to destroy both the peace and respectability of his friend; and, therefore, in reporting the king's utter disbelief of these calumnies, advised him "never to appear openly in his defence till he was openly charged." †

Quarrel with Loftus.

That violence of temper which had impelled him to persecute Lord Mountnorris, again engaged him in a contest extremely prejudicial to his reputation. The Lord Chancellor Loftus and his family had exerted themselves to promote the lord deputy's views, and had enjoyed more of his favour than almost any other noble house in Ireland. Amidst this interchange of benefits and acknowledgments, Sir John Gifford, who had married the Chancellor's daughter, having demanded, in behalf of his wife, some provision which his father-in-law denied, brought an action before the lord deputy in the Castle Chamber, where he obtained an award entirely in his favour. To this judgment the Chancellor refused to submit, on the ground that the action ought to have been brought in the

* Wentworth to Laud, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 105.
† Laud to Wentworth, Ibid. p. 126, 127.

ordinary courts of law, and that the tribunal before which it was tried was both illegal and partial. Enraged at this resistance, Wentworth procured and rigidly enforced an order to sequester him from the council, to deprive him of the seals, and to commit him to prison till his obstinacy should be subdued. * The clamour excited by this extreme severity to a minister of such dignity and reputation, was aggravated by the discovery of some letters which were said to indicate an intercourse more gallant than decorous between the lord deputy and Lady Gifford. † The influence of Wentworth at the English court was not, however, to be shaken: the appeal of the Lord Chancellor was disregarded; and himself compelled to purchase the forgiveness of Wentworth by submission to the award, and an acknowledgment of his error. ‡

Consulted on the Spanish war. February 1637.

But transactions of superior importance now began to demand his exertions on a more extended

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 69, 161, 164, 172, 179, 196, 227, 228.

† Leland, Vol. III. p. 40.

‡ Ibid. p. 261, 389. Although Wentworth finally triumphed in this affair, yet, in a letter to the king, (p. 161,) he discovers no small apprehension of the clamour which it excited. He excuses the whole of his conduct by alleging that he merely acted in obedience to the royal authority; and the obstinacy of the chancellor he attributes "to the evil spirit of insubordination which began to trouble the age."

theatre. Hitherto the king had restricted even his most confidential communications with Wentworth to Irish affairs, and had never demanded his counsels with regard to the general interests of the empire. After the death of Buckingham, Charles appears to have entertained the resolution of confining his ministers to separate departments of government, while himself, the great presiding spirit, should inform and guide the whole. His jealousy of a man so lately an oppositionist, and the enemy of Buckingham, seems also to have yielded only gradually to devoted obedience and a series of important services.* The project of a war which would have affected Ireland more immediately than the rest of his dominions, appears to have been the first occasion on which Charles broke through his reserve, and demanded the opinion of Wentworth on a question relative to the empire at large.

1637. The expedient of ship-money had proved productive even beyond the sanguine expectations of the court. It had indeed been resisted by Hambden and others, and its legality solemnly argued before the judges of England; but the great majority having declared in its favour, it now seemed

* Clarendon observes, (Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 31,) that "the king admitted very few into any degree of trust, who had ever discovered themselves to be enemies to the duke, or against whom that favourite had manifested a notable prejudice."

to rest on the surest foundation. The courtiers looked on this impost as "a spring and magazine that had no bottom, as an everlasting supply for all occasions." * The king, forgetting his former difficulties, began to meditate the enterprise of recovering the Palatinate by the aid of Protestant allies; and as France, then at war with Spain, longed to engage England in the quarrel, the rising ascendancy of the queen was employed to accelerate the warlike resolutions of her husband. Against these projects, Laud, in consternation, remonstrated; declaring that they would involve the king in all his former difficulties, and ultimately lead to the sacrifice of his servants. † As the plans of Wentworth for promoting the trade and cultivation of Ireland, depended essentially on the maintenance of an amicable intercourse with Spain, Charles, distracted by different counsels, judged it expedient to demand the lord deputy's opinion. ‡

The reply of Wentworth is interesting both for its sagacity, and for the schemes which it developes for the consolidation of an absolute monarchy. "He desired his majesty to contrast the numerous losses which a war would bring to Great Britain, and the ruin of the rising prosperity of Ireland, His reply.

* Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 68.
† Laud to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 66.
‡ King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 53.

with the incalculable advantages to the whole empire from carrying on the neutral trade during a war between France and Spain. He advised him to weigh the difficulty of making the members of a coalition act with cordiality, and not turn aside from views of private interest.* Would a fleet, without an army, be sufficient to overawe continental enemies, and to confirm backward allies? Even were the conquest of the Palatinate accomplished, would France generously maintain a large permanent army to guard a country unequal to its own defence? Above all, it was to be considered what resources would be requisite for so great an enterprise, and how they were to be procured. Ship-money might be more peevishly granted during a war, from the want of means to bridle the refractory; and should this impost prove sufficient for the equipment of a powerful fleet, what would be the consequence should this fleet, by any sinister accident, be lost? Would it be possible to provide another without having recourse to Parliament? And how unwise to summon that assembly at this season! The opinion of the judges in favour of the levy of ship-money, he considered the greatest service which the bench had rendered, in

* The powers who now projected a coalition for the recovery of the Palatinate were the French, the Swedes, the Danes, and the Dutch.

his time, to the crown: * still the crown stood upon one leg, unless similar levies were also authorized for the land forces. This last measure, if once well fortified, would render his majesty the most considerable monarch in Christendom, *and for ever vindicate royalty at home from the conditions and restraints of subjects.* Yet to this great enterprise the people could be won and habituated only during the season of peace, when the crown could frame and execute its measures, unembarrassed by necessity, and uncontrolled by the vicissitudes of war. Should it be necessary to do something in consequence of the faith pledged to the Elector Palatine, far better than a hostile contest would it be to employ two or three hundred thousand pounds in buying off the pretenders to his crown. Where, it might be asked, could this money be procured? From the subjects of England, who would find their advantage in purchasing, at so easy a rate, an exemption from the far heavier expences of warfare. And by a general acquiescence in an imposition of this nature, a precedent would be gained, and the crown become possessed

* Clarendon, the strenuous friend of the crown, was of a very different opinion: "The damage and mischief," says he, "cannot be expressed, that the crown and the state sustained by the deserved reproach and infamy that attended the judges, by being made use of in this and like acts of power." Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 70.

of an authority and right which would draw after it many and great advantages, more proper to be thought on at some other season than the present." *

To these representations the king listened, and the nation was saved from external hostilities. †

Affairs of Scotland.

But struggles far different from a distant war were now approaching; and an example of rebellion was about to be set by the country which, in the preceding generation, had given a king to the empire. On the departure of James to assume the crown of England, his native kingdom exhibited every indication of permanent tranquillity. The factions of the nobles, which, in former times, had so often bereft the monarch of his crown or his life, were weakened by the progress of civilization, and almost ceased to exist on the removal of the court. The religious contests which had agitated the nation for a century, were now tranquillized by a submission, almost universal, to the Calvinist creed and worship, as established by law; and the king might exult in a total emancipation from ecclesiastical control, while he saw the clergy humble from their poverty, and inoffensive by their estrangement from political affairs.

* Wentworth to the King, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 60, 61, 62, 63, 64.

† King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 78.

But James, charmed with the adulation of the English prelates, viewed the subject in a very different light; and having zealously adopted the maxim of *no bishop, no king*, he conceived the project of strengthening the hands of monarchy in Scotland, by the introduction of Episcopacy. His attempts, however, met with the most serious obstacles: the nobility and principal gentry were alarmed at the prospect of losing those ample possessions, which they had wrested from the Romish church at the Reformation; and the people looked with abhorrence on rites which approached to the symbols of Catholic superstition. The result of a contest between the general sense of a nation and a feeble monarch was such as might have been foreseen. James, at his death, left his authority in Scotland weakened by dissentions which he had wantonly excited, and the people rendered, by successful opposition, more determined in their resistance to religious innovation.

During the first years of the new reign, while Charles was wholly occupied with his refractory parliaments, these abortive attempts were discontinued, and Scotland remained in a profound repose, which showed how little monarchy had to dread from either her civil or ecclesiastical establishment. It was not until Laud had acquired the chief direction of affairs, that Charles was induced to renew those attempts which had proved so unprosperous

in the hands of his father. An imposing hierarchy, a splendid ritual, a universal conformity, were objects for which that prelate was ready to hazard the peace of a kingdom, while to Charles, the extirpation of Presbyterianism seemed an indispensable step to the establishment of an uncontrolled monarchy. The first measure taken to effect these objects, the revocation of the impropriated tithes from the nobility and gentry, diffused discontent among those most capable of resistance. A visit to Scotland, which the king undertook for the same purpose, seemed at first to promise an auspicious issue. The appearance of their young king was hailed with universal demonstrations of joy; and while the people were filled with the warmest sensations of loyalty, Laud was permitted to mount the principal pulpit of their capital, and, in his odious garments, to declaim in behalf of his still more odious rites. But when the king, in prosecution of his favourite scheme, ventured to infringe the most sacred privileges of Parliament, to interrupt the deliberations, to threaten the members even in the house, and to exercise vengeance on the refractory, the affection of the people was suddenly converted into dislike, and Charles had to lament, that his departure from Scotland seemed to diffuse no less satisfaction than his arrival.

But this demonstration of the national sentiments was insufficient to check the ardour of

Laud: he even resolved to introduce into Scotland innovations which had been resisted in England; and to array its worship in a ceremonial still more conformable to the church of Rome. * The Scots beheld, with indignation, those institutions for which their fathers had bled, supplanted by rites connected in their minds with an abhorred superstition; they were farther disgusted to see these innovations enforced by the sole authority of the king; and the solemn statutes of the legislature superseded by royal proclamations. † The condemnation to death of Lord Balmerino, for having 1635.
in his possession the draught of a very temperate petition to the king for a redress of grievances, seemed to indicate that personal security, as well as political freedom, was at an end. ‡ The cause of religion now became united with that of civil liber-

* The innovations of Laud were, in themselves, indifferent, and even puerile: capes, surplices, tippets, the name and position of the altar, the ring in marriage, the cross in baptism, were things to attract only the ignorant and superstitious: but when so gravely undertaken by the head of the English church, and so zealously enforced by the sovereign, they assumed a more serious character in the eyes of the populace. They were no longer the playthings of children, but the engines of great ministers and princes: and however indifferent they might appear, men could not believe them to be so in reality, when maintained by a monarch at the risk of involving his kingdom in rebellion and bloodshed.

† Burnet's Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton, p. 29, 30, 31. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 106.

‡ Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 281.

ty; and under the avowed direction of the principal nobility and gentry, the opposition to the innovations of the court acquired order and solidity.
1638. A covenant to maintain their rights was eagerly embraced throughout the nation. * The threats, the promises, the intrigues which the court employed to dissolve or disunite this confederacy, were alike unsuccessful; and when Charles appeared at the head of an army to enforce his mandates with the sword, he was met, on the borders, by a force inferior to his own in splendour, but superior in the ardour of the soldiers, and the expe-
1639. rience of the officers. † Laud, whose instigations had precipitated this crisis, now advised his sovereign to treat with the rebels; and Charles, who had too good reason to distrust both the talents of his generals, and the adherence of his troops, ‡ purchased a respite from his dangers by a hasty pacification; § after which, irritated and dejected, he dismissed his army. ||

Wentworth's conduct to the Scots.

Alarmed at the dangers which environed his power, and distracted by the contradictory counsels of his ministers, Charles began to look for support from the judgment and vigour of Wentworth. The lord deputy had not beheld, in tranquillity, the

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* Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 741.
† Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 116.
‡ Ibid. p. 121. May, p. 46. 1022. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 123.
§ Rushworth, Vol. III. p.
|| Ibid. p. 124.

progress of the Scottish commotions; and though not directly consulted by the king, he had often taken occasion, in his dispatches, to state his sentiments concerning these disorders. * He had early declared the necessity of providing a sufficient force to awe or chastise the refractory Scots; and, until this could be accomplished, he had strongly urged his majesty to keep the insurgents in check, by placing strong garrisons in Berwick and Carlisle, in Dumbarton and Leith. † Dreading, above all things, the commencement of hostilities, while the king was yet unprovided with money or troops, he entreated him to defer active operations for another year: he expressed a hope that the Scots, if not driven to extremities, might yet return to a sense of duty; and reminded him, that "it was a tender point to draw blood first from subjects, even when rebellious." ‡ Nor had he confined his zeal to mere advice: by a resolute activity, he had repressed some rising disorders among the Scottish settlers in Ulster, who now amounted to sixty thousand men: § and had not only prevented them from assisting their countrymen, but compelled them to abjure the covenant. ‖ On the first

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 233.
† Ibid. p. 191, 192, 235, 280, 324.
‡ Wentworth to the King, Ibid. p. 314, 356.
§ Ibid. p. 270. ‖ Ibid. p. 338, 345.

requisition of the king, he had sent a detachment of troops to garrison Carlisle, and to act against the Scots: he had laboured to recruit and discipline the army of Ireland for further services: he had offered contributions from himself and his friends to defray the expences of the war: he had stimulated his connections in Yorkshire, to exert themselves in the royal cause; and had lamented that, in this season of danger, he should not be found at his majesty's side. *

Sent for by the king, July 23, 1639.

Charles perceived the evils which he had incurred from neglecting the advice of Wentworth; and he looked around him in vain for a minister of equal zeal. He now condescended to request the lord deputy's personal attendance, which he had formerly declined. † He wished, he said, to consult him on some military projects: "but," added he, in a tone of dejection, "I have much more, and indeed too much, to desire your counsel and attendance for some time, which I think not fit to express by letter, more than this—the Scottish covenant spreads too far." He begged, however, that Wentworth would not make known the motive of his request, but find some other pretext for visiting England. ‡

* Wentworth to the King, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 233, 278, 279, 289, 308.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 281.

‡ King to Wentworth, Ibid. p. 372.

The lord deputy lost no time in obeying this summons. Committing the government of Ireland in his absence, to his friend Wandesford, he hastened to the English court, under pretence of opposing the appeal of the Lord Chancellor Loftus. The high opinion entertained of his abilities made his arrival in London the general theme of conversation and conjecture. Some, remembering his early ardour in the cause of the people, fondly imagined that he had hitherto been subservient to the court, only to ingratiate himself thoroughly with the king; and that he would now employ his ascendancy to wean his majesty from arbitrary counsels. But others, considering his ambition, and the maxims of his government in Ireland, gave a very different explanation of the motives of his arrival.* Arrival in England. November 1639.

The immediate object of discussion submitted to Wentworth, and his principal colleagues, Laud and Hamilton, † was the nature of the measures to be pursued towards the Scots. ‡ So vague and in- Advises war with the Scots.

* May, p. 53, 54.

† These three ministers, and occasionally some others, were, by the opponents of the court, reproachfully termed the *junto* and the *cabinet-council*. Such was the origin of a term now attended with peculiar distinction. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 149.

‡ It was only a few months before this period that Charles had, for the first time, consulted his English ministers concerning the affairs of Scotland. Both he and his father had adhered to their rule of advising with Scotsmen alone concerning the affairs of Scot-

distinct had been the provisions of the late pacification, that the contracting parties could not agree either with respect to its terms or its spirit; and the representation given by the one was flatly denied by the other.* The Scots seemed resolved to maintain their interpretation of the treaty at the head of an armed force; and as it was now discovered that they had meditated an application to the French court for succours,† Wentworth declared that there was no other alternative for the king, than to forego his sovereignty, or reduce his rebellious subjects by force of arms.

And a parliament.

The proposition for war was readily acceded to; but how to procure supplies was a more difficult question. So much had the dissipation of the court exhausted both the ordinary and extraordinary revenues,‡ that the king had been enabled to march against the Scots, only by the uncertain aid of voluntary contributions, and by commanding all the crown vassals to join his standard under pain of forfeiting their tenures.§ The arbitrary expedients of selling monopolies, and levying partial

land: and to this policy, whatever might be its motive, Wentworth ascribes the commotions which now agitated that part of the island. Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 190.

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 123.

† King's Declaration. Clarendon, p. 129.

‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 267.

§ Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 116.

exactions, had already been carried to the utmost; and ship-money began to be paid with more reluctance as the necessities of the crown increased.* In the present state of affairs, it seemed dangerous to provoke the nation by more unauthorized imposts; and, as every other resource seemed hopeless, Wentworth, Laud, and Hamilton, united in proposing that a parliament should be summoned.† An expedient, long evaded by every art, and adopted only from extreme necessity, could not be regarded with much confidence; and the council, therefore, thought proper to point to an alternative by a vote "to assist the king in extraordinary ways, if the parliament should prove peevish, and refuse supplies."‡ Wentworth displayed his superior zeal by subscribing twenty thousand pounds as his share of a voluntary contribution; § and to set an example of loyalty to the English, he requested that a parliament, for the same objects, should previously be held in Ireland.

It was no longer a season for Charles to be penurious of his honours, or afraid to share in the unpopularity of Wentworth. It was not the reward of a meritorious servant that was now in question, but the interest of the sovereign himself.

Created Earl of Strafford, and Lord Lieutenant. January 1640.

* Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 978. Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 308. † Laud's Diary. ‡ Ibid.

§ Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1051. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 280.

Wentworth was created Earl of Strafford, adorned with the Garter, and invested with the title of Lord Lieutenant, which, since the time of Essex, had been withheld from the governors of Ireland.* These honours, so often requested, and so tardily bestowed, had yet their charms in the eyes of the receiver; and both in a studied address to the king,† and in some private letters to his wife, ‡ he betrayed his exultation on this accession to his splendour.

As the appointed day for the meeting of the Irish parliament approached, the Lord Lieutenant quitted London to regulate its proceedings; and when overtaken at Beaumaris, by a severe fit of the gout, he hastened on board, though the winds continued contrary, lest the increasing distemper should become too painful to permit his removal. §

March 16, 1640.

Success with Irish Parliament.

The zeal of the Irish Parliament exceeded his most sanguine expectations. Their governor now appeared to enjoy not only the royal approbation, but the direction of his majesty's councils; and through his hands all favours were to be expected. The war against the Scots offered also a particular occasion for making interest at the English court;

* Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1050. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 280.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 390.

‡ Biographia Britannica from the MSS. in Musæo Thoresbiano.

§ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 394.

and every one strove to distinguish himself by a zealous attachment to the Lord Lieutenant, and an unbounded devotion to the king. Having unanimously voted four subsidies, the sum required by the court, the parliament declared that this was a very insignificant expression of their zeal; that his majesty should have the "fee-simple of their estates for his great occasions." * They proceeded to draw up a formal declaration, in which they "humbly offered their persons and estates, even to their utmost ability," for his majesty's future supply, till the reduction of the present disorders. † In the preamble to the bill of subsidies, they declared that their present warm loyalty arose from a deep sense of the inestimable benefits conferred on their country by the Lord Lieutenant; they recounted his meritorious services to the king, and assured his majesty that all these had been effected "without the least hurt or grievance to any well disposed subject." ‡

To Strafford, so often reviled, so eager to bind the king by obligations, these proceedings were necessarily gratifying; § and, with a pardonable

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* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 396, 397. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 281, 282. † Ibid. p. 283.

‡ Ibid. Vol. II. p. 396, 397. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1051. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 280—284.

§ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 403.

triumph, he requested the English court to make public the loyal declaration of the Irish parliament as an example to the rest of the empire. * Having, with incredible diligence, levied a body of eight thousand men, as a reinforcement to the royal army, he quitted Ireland, after a stay of a fortnight, to attend the opening of the English parliament. †

Dangerous illness.

But that activity, which had so much contributed to the success of his schemes, was now suspended by unseasonable infirmities. From excessive fatigue, a violent flux was added to his gout, which had now seized him in both feet; and to such a degree were these distempers aggravated by a storm which he encountered on his passage, that, on his

April 4.

arrival at Chester, he could with difficulty endure to be carried ashore. ‡ Here he lay for some days extended on a bed, unable to bear the slightest motion, and equally tormented by pain and anxiety. In this paroxysm of his distempers, there occurred a circumstance strongly characteristic of his unconquerable energy. The king having demanded, from the county of York, two hundred men for the garrison of Berwick, the lieutenants, who inclined to the popular party, ventured to refuse the

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* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 399.

† Ibid. p. 399, 403. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 280.

‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 403.

requisition. Strafford, hearing of this refusal, and learning that the privy-council had in contemplation to demand satisfaction for this contumacy, wrote to Secretary Windebanke, expressing his astonishment "that the council should think of any other satisfaction, than sending for them up, and laying them by the heels." *

As soon as he could endure the motion, he caused himself to be placed in a litter, and conveyed by slow journies to London. Here he found the parliament already met, and conducting their discussions with unexpected temper and moderation. † They were aware that extreme necessity alone had induced the king to assemble them; they had many grievances to redress; and could complain that the Petition of Right had been violated in almost every instance. But elected from among the most wealthy and enlightened men in the nation, and unwilling to see their country ravaged by a civil

In the English Parliament. April 13, 1640.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 409.

† Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 131, informs us that the court persisted in the same unpopular course even after issuing the writs for the meeting of parliament. "That it might not appear that the court was at all apprehensive of what the parliament would or could do; and that it was convened by his majesty's grace and inclination, not by any motive of necessity; it proceeded in all respects in the same unpopular way it had done. Ship-money was levied with the same severity; and the same rigour used in ecclesiastical courts, without the least compliance with the humour of any man."

war, the Commons were disposed to relieve the necessities of the crown, and seemed inclined to wean the king from his arbitrary counsels, by showing how much more amply and easily he could obtain supplies by the legal course of parliaments. They spoke, indeed, of grievances, but in terms so moderate and respectful as to avoid all offence; and when a member, less guarded than the rest, ventured to call ship-money *an abomination*, he narrowly escaped a severe reprehension. *

But these favourable presages were quickly blasted by the impatience of the court. The king, in his opening speech, delivered by the mouth of the lord keeper, had told them that he desired, not their advice, but their supplies; and that he expected these to be dispatched, before their grievances were brought in question. † While the Commons, a few days afterwards, were engaged in debating whether they should comply with this requisition of the king, or, according to the established form, first represent their grievances, and afterwards consider of supplies, Charles, unexpectedly, hastened to the House of Lords, desired them to enter on the question of supply, and, both by their example and admonition, to bring the Commons to the same course. ‡ This precipitate

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* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 134. † Ibid. p. 132.
‡ Nalson, Vol. I. p. 330, 331. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1144. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 134.

interference, and the ready obedience of the Lords, threw the Commons into violent agitation. Since their first admission into parliament, it had been their acknowledged right to commence all discussions relative to pecuniary supplies; and the present infraction of this fundamental privilege seemed an attempt to awe them by the authority of the peers. Several days elapsed in the debates and conferences to which this incident gave rise; and the king, by his unadvised precipitation, only delayed the discussions which he desired to accelerate, and irritated the Commons, when it was most his interest to conciliate them. *

Charles now attempted another expedient to procure immediate supplies. He informed the Commons, that, although the legality of ship-money had been ascertained by the decision of the judges of England; yet, as it was not willingly submitted to by the people, he would, for a grant of twelve subsidies, consent to renounce his pretensions to it for ever. † To some members, it seemed unwise to acknowledge the justice of this arbitrary exaction, by purchasing an exemption from it; but the majority were willing to wave the question of right, and only desired a mitigation of the

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 134, 135. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1146—1153. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 335—340.

† Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 135. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1154 Nalson, Vol. I. p. 341.

price demanded by the king, which, even to the most moderate, appeared exorbitant. They were, however, informed by Sir Henry Vane, now Treasurer of the Household, and Secretary of State, that, unless they voted the supply in the very proportion and manner specified in the royal message, it would not be accepted by his majesty. * This declaration, which was enforced by Herbert, the Solicitor General, appeared peremptory even to the king's best friends; and after a long discussion, the question was adjourned till the following day. But Vane, having been commissioned to report the proceedings to his majesty, represented the warmth and resistance of the house in such glowing colours, as filled the king with the most fearful presages. † Dreading some violent measure against his arbitrary exactions, he next morning repaired to the House of Lords, and summoning the Commons into his presence, confounded the parliament by an immediate dissolution. ‡

Consternation and discontent were spread throughout the kingdom, by this unexpected violence to a parliament, whose assembling the people had fondly regarded as the renovation of their constitutional rights. Charles himself immediately repented of his rashness, accused Vane of having deceived him,

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* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 138. † Ibid. p. 139.
‡ Ibid. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1155. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 342.

denied that ever he had authorized the peremptory demands delivered to the house, and expressed a wish to recall the dissolution.* But finding it too late to repair his error, he published a high-toned declaration defending his conduct; and, according to his usual practice, imprisoned some of the most conspicuous members.† He now employed every expedient to raise supplies by the royal authority. He issued orders to impress recruits for the army; commanded the counties to pay specified sums for clothing and marching the troops; imposed a loan of three hundred thousand pounds on the city of London, and imprisoned the refractory citizens; ordered the pepper under the Exchange to be bought up on his account, and sold at an undervalue; seized the bullion in the mint; and was at one time advised to coin three hundred thousand pounds of base money for the payment of the troops.‡

Appointed to command the troops.

By means of these expedients, and a considerable loan from his principal courtiers,§ Charles was enabled to march against the Scots, who, on their

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 139, 140.

† Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1160—1167. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 344—351.

‡ Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1170—1217. May, p. 62, 63. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 486—491. This last project was abandoned; and, on the earnest representations of the merchants, only a third of the bullion in the mint was retained as a loan.

§ Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 140.

part, were preparing to carry the war into England. The Earl of Northumberland had been appointed commander-in-chief: but, on account of his illness, the command devolved on Strafford, the lieutenant-general, whose distempers hardly permitted him to sit on horseback.* Looking on the Scots as a horde of undisciplined rebels, he had beheld the late treaty with indignation; and declared his opinion, that a moderate English army could drive them, with disgrace, to their homes. But before he could reach his troops, he was met by the mortifying intelligence that a part of them had been attacked by the Scots at Newburn on Tyne; and, although aided by the advantages of ground, had, almost without coming to blows, betaken themselves to an ignominious flight. On this the main body abandoning Newcastle, where their ammunition and provisions were deposited, halted not till they reached the neighbourhood of Durham, where they were met by their incensed Lieutenant-General.† Irritable from the painful distempers which hung on his constitution, and exasperated beyond all bounds by the misconduct of his army, Strafford undertook the command with looks of indignation, and the language of reproach. Stung by his indiscriminate censures, and inflamed by the arts of his secret adversaries, the troops

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 141, 144. † Nalson, Vol. I. p. 426.

soon displayed more hatred against their general than against the enemy; and the first military exploit of Strafford was to abandon the northern counties to the mercy of the foe, and retreat to York with a disgraced and mutinous army. *

The tide of Strafford's fortune was now rapidly ebbing. His avowed sentiments of the Scots had rendered them his implacable enemies: his support of ship-money, and other arbitrary measures, had procured him almost equal hatred among the people of England: and his influence and conduct rendered a powerful party of the courtiers eager to promote his ruin. The Marquis of Hamilton, who now enjoyed the principal confidence of the king, had long beheld him with aversion: † and he was equally hated by Lord Holland and Sir Harry Vane, the confidential advisers of the queen. He had offended Holland by some contemptuous expressions: ‡ he had provoked Vane by obstructing his promotion; and, when created Earl of Strafford, he wantonly exasperated this adversary, by procuring himself to be also created Baron of Raby, a manor belonging to Vane, and regarded by him as his own future title. § The Earls of Essex and Arundel had been displaced by his in-

Adverse affairs.

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 144, 145.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 265.

‡ Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 150. § Ibid. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 411, introduction, p. 73, Vol. II. p. 2.

fluence, from the commands which they held in the former expedition against Scotland, and were, on other accounts, his declared foes: Arundel, from some private quarrels; and Essex, from friendship to the Earl of Clanricarde. * But his most dangerous enemy at court was the queen, whose influence over her husband was daily increasing. Her inveterate antipathy to the Duke of Buckingham had been transferred to his creature, Laud; and, by a natural association, to the principal friend and supporter of Laud. Strafford had made some attempts to conciliate her favour; † but he had offended her by dissuading an active co-operation with France, and still more by his opposition to the promotion of Vane, whom she supported with all her influence. ‡

The superior ascendancy of this hostile interest was soon felt by Strafford, who now saw the most important and hazardous measures undertaken without his concurrence, or even his knowledge. As the lords had proved, in the last parliament, more submissive than the commons, the king was advised to revive an old feudal institution, and summon a grand council of peers, for the relief of

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 150, 151.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 256.

‡ Nalson, ubi supra. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 125, 126.

his necessities. * Apprehensive, however, that the peers would urge him to call a parliament, he resolved at least, to have the merit of a voluntary sacrifice; and, in his opening speech to the grand council, announced that he had already determined to adopt this measure. † If Strafford was confounded at these precipitate transactions, he experienced a deeper mortification from the discovery that his inveterate enemy, Lord Savile, was employed in carrying on private overtures between the court and the Scots. ‡ While eagerly engaged in strengthening and animating his army for a new encounter, he found a treaty actually commenced with the rebellious subjects; and the negotiations entrusted to sixteen peers, among whom he could discover his most active enemies, but not one friend. § And while the Scots were lavish in their professions of attachment to the king and the English nation, they refused to hold their conferences at York, because it was within the jurisdiction of their mortal enemy, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. ‖

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* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 147. † Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1275.

‡ Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 155.

§ Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1276. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 155.

‖ The words of the Scots on this occasion are expressive of great antipathy: "We cannot conceal what danger may be apprehended in our going to York, and surrendering ourselves into the hands of an army commanded by the lieutenant of Ireland, *against whom,*

His mistaken views.

Strafford now found himself placed, by the effects of undue zeal, amidst a host of enemies; and received no doubtful intimations that he had mistaken the state of the national spirit. He had, indeed, long known that the popular feelings were exasperated by arbitrary exactions, * by the infamy of the judges in perverting the laws to gratify the court, † by the cruel punishments employed to repress freedom of speech and writing, ‡ by

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as a chief incendiary, (according to our demands, which are the subject of the treaty itself,) *we intend to insist*, as is expressed in our remonstrance and declaration; who hath, in the parliament of Ireland, proceeded against us as traitors and rebels, (the best titles his lordship, in his common talk, honours us with,) whose commission is to subdue and destroy us, and who, by all means, and on all occasions, desireth the breaking up of the treaty of peace." Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1293. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 453.

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 67, 68. † Ibid. p. 70.

‡ Never did the press groan under such grievous oppression. Neither the rank of an offender, nor the dubious nature of an offence, could guard men from the most harsh and disgraceful punishments. Mr Prynn, a barrister, who had written a book against masquerades and plays, was, in the court of the Star Chamber, found guilty of a libel against the government, because the king and queen happened to be passionately fond of these diversions. For this alleged crime he was sentenced to a fine of five thousand pounds, to be imprisoned for life, to stand in the pillory in Westminster and Cheapside, and to lose both his ears, one in each of these places. Having, in his prison, written some exposition of the injustice of the proceedings against him, he was, for this new offence, sentenced by the same court to pay another fine of five thousand pounds, to stand again in the pillory, and to lose the remainder of his ears! The hangman, from the closeness of the stumps to the head, was obliged

the usurped power of the Star Chamber, and other arbitrary courts, * and by the consequent annihila-

rather to saw than cut them off. Bastwick a physician, and Burton a divine, were sentenced to the same punishments for similar offences. See their trials and sentences in Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 220—241, 382. Dr Leighton, a divine of learning and virtue, for writing a book against prelacy with too much warmth, was sentenced to pay ten thousand pounds to the king, to be imprisoned during his majesty's pleasure, and to suffer a variety of infamous and cruel punishments, which, as Archbishop Laud himself has recorded in his Diary, were inflicted in the following manner: "He was severely whipt before he was set in the pillory: being set in the pillory, he had one of his ears cut off; one side of his nose slit; branded on one cheek with a red-hot iron, with the letters *S. S.* signifying a *stirrer up of sedition*, and afterwards carried back again to the Fleet prison, to be kept in close custody; and on that day sevennight, his sores upon his back, ear, nose, and face being not cured, he was whipt again at the pillory in Cheapside, and there had the remainder of his sentence executed upon him, by cutting off the other ear, slitting the other side of the nose, and branding the other cheek." After enduring these cruelties, he was thrown into a damp unwholesome dungeon, from which he was, eleven years after, rescued by the Long Parliament, having lost his eye-sight, his hearing, and nearly the whole use of his limbs.

* Nothing can more expose the excess of this abuse than the confession of the loyalist historian Clarendon: "For the better support of these extraordinary ways, and to protect the agents and instruments, who must be employed in them, and to discountenance and suppress all bold inquirers and opposers, the Council-Table and Star Chamber enlarge their jurisdiction to a vast extent. 'Holding,' as Thucydides said of the Athenians, 'for honourable that which pleased, and for just that which profited;' and being the same persons in several rooms, grew both courts of law to determine right, and courts of revenue to bring money into the treasury; the Council-Table, by proclamations, enjoining to the

tion of security for persons and property: he knew farther, that the consciences of many were shocked by the innovations of Laud, and that the ambition of the nobility was deeply wounded by the attempt to transfer public offices into the hands of the clergy. * Still he had attributed the ebulli-

people what was not enjoined by the law, and prohibiting that which was not prohibited; and the Star Chamber censuring the breach, and disobedience to those proclamations, by very great fines and imprisonment. So that any disrespect to any acts of state, or to the persons of statesmen, was in no time more penal; and those foundations of right, by which men valued their security, to the apprehension of wise men, never more in danger to be destroyed." Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 68, 69.

* Laud, by his efforts to exalt the clergy, had greatly disgusted the nobility. He had induced the king to bestow the office of Lord High Treasurer on Juxon, a very worthy man, but entirely unknown, who had been, within two years, raised from obscurity; and, by the interest of Laud, first appointed clerk of the king's closet, and afterwards Bishop of London. There were few things which excited more violent enmity to the church, than conferring the office of Treasurer on Juxon; but to Laud, it was a source of unspeakable satisfaction, as he records in his Diary: "March 6th, Sunday, William Juxon, Lord Bishop of London, made Lord High Treasurer of England: no churchman had it since Henry the Seventh's time. I pray God bless him to carry it so, that the church may have honour, and the king and the state service and contentment by it. And now, if the church will not hold up themselves, under God I can do no more." In Scotland, at the introduction of Episcopacy, this invidious eagerness for the promotion of churchmen was carried still further: they held nearly all the more important offices of state, along with seats in the privy-council.

tions of popular discontent * to the want of that vigour, before which he had, in Ireland, found all obstacles yield. He had returned the exhortations of Laud, to persist in *thorough* measures: † he had treated the popular leaders with contempt; ‡ and

* These discontents broke out, in the most alarming manner, while the court was attempting to levy an army against the Scots. The impressed men employed the most shocking means to avoid the service; one cut off his toe, and another even hanged himself. Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 351. In several counties, the soldiers mutinied and murdered their officers. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1191—1195. Clarendon's State Papers, Vol. II. p. 101.

† He tells Laud, (Letters, Vol. II. p. 250,) that, in his opinion, the Scottish affairs were lost by too great a desire to do things quietly; that opposition is, at first, easily quashed by vigour; but, adds he, "so long as I do serve, I will *thorough*, by the grace of God, follow after what shall please him to send." He seems also to have formed a wrong idea of the king's firmness, unless, perhaps, he thought it necessary to express his sentiments cautiously to a fellow-courtier: "Our master is an excellent horseman, and knows perfectly how to bring to obedience a hard mouth with a sharp bit, where a sweeter will not do it." Wentworth to Newcastle, Letters, Vol. II. p. 256. In another letter to Laud, he speaks of the spirit of the age as "a grievous and overspreading leprosy. Less," he adds, "than *thorough* will not overcome it. There is a cancerous malignity in it, which must be cut forth, which long since hath rejected all other means." Letters, Vol. II. p. 136.

‡ "I am confident," he writes to Laud, "that the king, being pleased to set himself in the business, is able, by his wisdom and ministers, to carry any just and honourable action through all imaginary opposition, for real there can be none: that, to start aside for such panic fears, fantastic apparitions as a *Prynn* or an *Elliot* shall set up, were the meanest folly in the world; that the debts of

had forgot that if some of them were, like himself, ready to accept the favours of the court, the impoverished court possessed not the means to buy off so numerous an opposition.

Difficulties. But circumstances were now such as to render his personal vigour of no avail. He no longer acted as the independent director of a separate government; and he found it in vain to advise resolute measures where his master was unstable, and where adverse counsels predominated. In the presence of such colleagues as Holland and Vane, he was obliged to repress his sentiments within his bosom, and give an apparent consent where opposition was fruitless.* He determined, however,

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the crown taken off, you may govern as you please; and most resolute I am that work may be done, without borrowing any help forth of the king's lodgings; and it is as downright a *peccatum ex te Israel* as ever was, if all this be not effected with speed and ease." Letters, Vol. I. p. 173. Hambden, he thinks, might have been easily reformed by some wholesome chastisement: "Mr Hambden is a great brother; and the very genius of that nation of people leads them always to oppose, both civilly and ecclesiastically, all that ever authority ordains for them. But, in good faith, were they rightly served, they should be whipt home into their right wits; and much beholden they should be to any that would thoroughly take pains with them in that kind." Wentworth to Laud, Letters, Vol. II. p. 138. Again; "In truth I still wish Mr Hambden, and others to his likeness, were well whipt into their right senses: and if that the rod be so used that it smarts not, I am the more sorry." Wentworth to Laud, Letters, p. 158.

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 159.

to give one practical proof of the possibility of re-instating the royal authority by vigorous exertion. As no cessation of arms had been agreed on with the Scots, during the negotiation he sent a party of horse, under a skilful officer, to attack them in their quarters. The enterprise was successful, the detachment defeated a large body of the enemy, and took all the officers prisoners. But this success, while it raised the spirits of the army, still more inflamed the Scots against Strafford: and, when it became known that the officer who conducted the party was a Roman Catholic, the English joined in the clamour against the foe of religion. The feeble king, overcome by their united remonstrances, commanded his general to forbear, for the future, from all offensive operations.*

To this galling mandate Strafford bowed in silence. Though haughty to inferiors, and daring towards an enemy, he gave himself up to the royal will with the most humble resignation. Impressed with the magnificence of titles and power, he looked with a reverential awe to those who possessed them in a superior degree; and could scarcely bring himself to question their orders, or approach them with familiarity. † Towards the king he had

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 159. Father Orleans, p. 34.

† This trait of his character is remarkably exemplified in his conduct to Laud. When that prelate, with whom he had, for

never ventured to assume that commanding and violent attitude which was employed, with unbounded success, by the Duke of Buckingham, and afterwards by the queen; and unfortunately, in the deliberations of Charles, zeal and compliance were unable to outweigh persevering importunity, or peremptory demand. Strafford had now to look on, in silent despair, while the humbled king formed a preliminary truce with the Scots, and even agreed to pay their army till the conclusion of a final treaty. *

But more severe trials soon awaited his fortitude. On the 3d of November 1640 was assembled that parliament which was to witness, during its continuance, the most violent convulsions to which the constitution and people of this island were ever exposed. It was composed, in a great measure, of the same persons as the former parliament; but their dispositions had become greatly changed. Their resentment had been roused by the abrupt dissolution, by the imprisonment of members, by

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some years, lived on the most intimate footing, was raised from the see of London to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, Wentworth desisted from his usual familiarity, and at length resumed it only in consequence of the good-natured raillery of Laud, who assured him that the palace of Lambeth was occupied by his old friend, the Bishop of London. Laud to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 111.

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 160.

the arbitrary methods employed to raise money; and the enterprises against the Scots, so unsuccessfully prosecuted, so feebly relinquished, had extinguished their respect for the king. Concluding, from repeated experience, that necessity alone could wrest concessions from their sovereign, they resolved, while the exchequer was empty, and a hostile army stationed in the kingdom, to proceed with a bold and determined hand in reforming abuses, and placing effectual barriers to future encroachments.

In these designs, the only obstacles which they feared were the vigour and talents of Strafford. While the popular leaders detested him as a traitor to their cause, and the Scots as the implacable enemy of their nation, all equally dreaded those abilities which had laid Ireland prostrate at his feet, and which might yet inspire vigour into the counsels of Charles. So long as he continued at the head of an army, there was no security that he might not, by some sudden movement, confound and crush their projects; and nothing was, therefore, to be achieved till after accomplishing his destruction.

Summoned to Parliament. November 1640.

The apprehensions of the king soon brought their dreaded adversary into their power. When he compared the management of an Irish parliament by Strafford with his own abortive attempts in England, Charles, without duly weighing the

difference of circumstances, was led to expect from this minister's assistance an issue no longer possible. Strafford hesitated to incur certain dangers in so hopeless a struggle. To the royal summons for his attendance in parliament, he replied by an earnest request that he might be permitted to retire to his government in Ireland, or to some other place where he might promote the service of his majesty, and not deliver himself into the hands of his enraged enemies. But to these representations Charles refused to listen; and, with too much confidence in a firmness which had so often failed him, he encouraged his minister by a solemn promise, that "not a hair of his head should be touched by the parliament." *

Impeached of high treason.

Strafford at length prepared to obey these repeated mandates; and having discovered a traitorous correspondence, in which his enemy Savile, and some other lords, had invited the Scots to invade England, he resolved to anticipate and confound his adversaries by an accusation of these popular leaders. † But no sooner were the Commons informed that he had taken his seat among the peers, than they ordered their doors to be shut; and, after they had continued several hours in deliberation, Pym, attended by a number of members,

* Whitlocke's Memorials, p. 37. † Strafford's Trial, p. 2.

appeared at the bar of the House of Lords, and, in the name of the Commons of England, impeached the Earl of Strafford of high treason. This charge was accompanied by a desire that he should be sequestered from parliament, and forthwith committed to prison; a request which, after a short deliberation, was granted. * November 13, 1640.

A few days after his impeachment, a charge of nine articles was presented by the Commons: but a committee of both houses being appointed to prepare the impeachment, went into investigations of great length, and, after three months' labour, extended the charges to twenty-eight articles. The grand point to be established against Strafford was *an attempt to subvert the fundamental laws of the country*: and the course in law was to show that such an attempt, as it would prove destructive to the state, was a traitorous design against its sovereign. The proofs of the accusation were deduced from a series of his actions infringing the laws, from words intimating arbitrary designs, and from certain counsels which directly tended to the ruin of the constitution. † Articles of impeachment.

As president of the council of York, Strafford was charged with having procured powers subversive of all law, with having committed insufferable

* Strafford's Trial, p. 4. May, p. 88.

† Strafford's Trial. Nalson, Vol. II. Whitlocke.

acts of oppression under colour of his instructions; and with having distinctly announced tyrannical intentions, by declaring that the people should find "the king's little finger heavier than the loins of the law."

As governor of Ireland, he was accused of having publicly asserted, "That the Irish were a conquered nation, and that the king might do with them as he pleased." He was charged with acts of oppression towards the Earl of Cork, Lord Mountnorris, the Lord Chancellor Loftus, Lord Dillon, the Earl of Kildare, and other persons. He had, it was alleged, issued a general warrant for the seizure of all persons who refused to submit to any legal decree against them, and for their detention till they either submitted, or gave bail to appear before the council table: he had sent soldiers to free quarters on those who would not obey his arbitrary decrees: he had prevented the redress of his injustice, by procuring instructions to prohibit all persons of distinction from quitting Ireland without his express licence: he had appropriated to himself a large share of the customs, the monopoly of tobacco, and the sale of licences for the exportation of certain commodities: he had committed grievous acts of oppression in guarding his monopoly of tobacco: he had, for his own interest, caused the rates on merchandise to be raised, and the merchants to be harassed with

new and unlawful oaths: he had obstructed the industry of the country, by introducing new and unknown processes into the manufacture of flax: he had encouraged his army, the instrument of his oppression, by assuring them that his majesty would regard them as a pattern for all his three kingdoms: he had enforced an illegal oath on the Scottish subjects in Ireland: he had given undue encouragement to papists, and had actually composed the whole of his new-levied troops of adherents to that religion.

As chief minister of England, it was laid to his charge that he had instigated the king to make war on the Scots, and had himself, as governor of Ireland, commenced hostilities: that, on the question of supplies, he had declared, "That his majesty should first try the parliament here, and if that did not supply him according to his occasions, he might then use his prerogative to levy what he needed; and that he should be acquitted both of God and man, if he took some other courses to supply himself, though it were against the will of his subjects:" that, after the dissolution of that parliament, he had said to his majesty, "That, having tried the affections of his people, he was loose and absolved from all rules of government, and was to do every thing that power would admit; that his majesty had tried all ways, and was refused, and should be acquitted both to God and

man; that he had an army in Ireland, which he might employ to reduce *this* kingdom to obedience." He was farther charged with having counselled the royal declaration which reflected so bitterly on the last parliament; with the seizure of the bullion in the Tower; the proposal of coining base money; a new levy of ship-money; and the loan of a hundred thousand pounds from the city of London. He was accused of having told the refractory citizens that no good would be done till they were laid up by the heels, and some of their aldermen hanged for an example. It was laid to his charge that he had levied arbitrary exactions on the people of Yorkshire to maintain his troops: and, finally, that his counsels had given rise to the rout at Newburn. *

His trial. Such were the charges on which Strafford was brought to trial: few transactions in the annals of our country have more strongly interested the nation. The writers of that age have spoken with wonder of the magnificent preparations for the solemn spectacle, the first which, on such an occasion, were made in Westminster Hall. The members of one house of parliament sat as judges; those of the other appeared as accusers; the most distinguished personages of the three kingdoms were assembled as spectators; and the novelty of

* Strafford's Trial, p. 61 to 75. Nalson, Vol. II. p. 11 to 20.

the scene was farther increased by the attendance of the king and queen, who were provided with closets, from which they could, unseen, observe the whole course of the proceedings. *

Of all the vast assemblage, no one was indifferent: all discovered, in their looks and gestures, the solicitude of friends, or the bitterness of enemies. The king, aware that the charges against Strafford rested on his zealous endeavours to enforce the plan of government so dear to his majesty's heart, looked on the fate of this minister as intimately interwoven with his own authority. The courtiers, however ill-affected to Strafford, were deeply interested in the issue, by an alarming community of interests. The ladies of the court were seen ranged around the hall, with note-books in their hands, and eagerly recording every successive occurrence: entering into the passions of their fathers and husbands, they discovered, with the frankness of their sex, an unbounded zeal in the cause of the prisoner. †

On the other hand, the three kingdoms appeared, by their representatives, to call down destruction on the object of their dread. The English branded him as a traitor to the cause of liberty, as the adviser and instrument of tyranny: the Scots,

* May, p. 91. Strafford's Trial. Whitlocke, p. 41. Nalson, Vol. II.
† May, p. 92.

as an incendiary who had instigated the king to take arms against them, and who had attempted to ravage their country with a civil war. The Irish, even those very men who had so lately united in following him with their acclamations, now came forward to denounce him as an oppressor, and to demand vengeance for their sufferings. For the rest Strafford was prepared; but this sudden change in the language of the Irish filled him with astonishment and affliction. He had mistaken the silent awe diffused by his vigour for an affectionate acquiescence in his government; nor did he perceive that the late applauses of the Irish parliament proceeded partly from apprehension of his power, partly from a belief that he had become the distributor of the royal favours. They now saw him divested of authority, arraigned as a criminal, pursued by general hatred; and they hoped that, by the superadded force of their accusations, they might for ever prevent his return among them.

The trial lasted fifteen days, in the course of which a number of witnesses were produced to substantiate the charges, and members of the impeaching committee daily commented on the evidence. Yet the passion with which they were transported, and their apprehension that Strafford might escape them, did not permit the Commons to trust wholly to the justice of their cause, or give the accused a fair opportunity of conducting his

defence. To prevent him from availing himself of his principal friend Sir George Radcliffe's advice and evidence, they committed that officer also to the Tower on a charge of high treason, and strictly prohibited any communication between them. Adhering rigidly to the old forms of process in cases of treason, they would not permit him to examine his witnesses upon oath. They even seemed inclined to allow him no exculpatory witnesses at all; for he received permission to summon them only three days before the commencement of his trial, although some of them had to be brought from Ireland. He was not allowed the assistance of counsel, either in examining the witnesses, or commenting on the evidence; and he was himself obliged to reply on the spot, after a very short interval for recollection. Though he supported his defence with consummate coolness and vigour, he could not help complaining, that, when his fortune, his reputation, his life, were at stake, he should, by an adherence to cruel usages, be denied those aids without which innocence could not assert her cause: but he was reminded that, in similar circumstances, a still harder measure had been dealt to the Earl of Mountnorris.

His defence.

The charges appeared to him by no means formidable. From the first perusal, he expressed his satisfaction that there was nothing capital in them, and that their connection with high treason could

be so easily disproved.* In his replies he maintained, that the enlarged instructions for the council of York had not been procured by his solicitations; that the specified instances of oppression in the northern counties were committed after his departure for Ireland; and that the words imputed to him were directly the reverse of those which he had spoken. With regard to Ireland, he vindicated his opinion that it was a conquered country, and that the king's prerogative was much greater there than in England. He contended that all the judgments, charged on him as arbitrary, were delivered by competent courts, in none of which he had above a single voice: that the prevention of persons from quitting the kingdom without licence, as well as placing soldiers at free quarters on the disobedient, were transactions consistent with ancient usages: that the flax manufacture owed all its prosperity to his exertions, and that his prohibition tended to remedy some barbarous and unjust methods of sorting the yarn: that his bargains for the customs and tobacco were profitable both to the crown and the country: and that the oath which he had enforced on the Scots was required by the critical circumstances of the times, and fully approved by his government. In regard to his transactions in England, it appeared in evi-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 413.

dence, that hostility against Scotland having been resolved on, he had merely counselled an offensive in preference to a defensive war: that his expressions relative to supplies were in strict conformity to the established maxim of the constitution; * that, in such emergencies as a foreign invasion, the sovereign was entitled to levy contributions, or adopt any other measure for the public defence. The words relative to the employment of the Irish army were denied by some, and affirmed by none, of the privy-counsellors then present, except his enemy Sir Henry Vane, who wavered and hesitated in his testimony; nor did even he venture to apply to the kingdom of England words uttered in a committee expressly assembled to consider of the reduction of Scotland. He observed that his harsh expressions towards the citizens of London were heard by only one interested individual, and not heard by others who stood as near him: he proved that the contributions in Yorkshire were voluntary; and that the proposals for seizing the bullion and coining base money did not proceed from him. The other charges were abandoned by the Commons, as either incapable of proof, or irrelative to the main question. †

The replies of Strafford to the several articles of

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* *Salus populi suprema lex.*

† Strafford's Trial, p. 61 to 75. Nalson, Vol. II. p. 11 to 20.

the impeachment seemed greatly to invalidate the allegations of his accusers; and when he proceeded to repel the inference of high treason, his arguments and eloquence appeared irresistible. He exposed the absurdity of alleging that a number of smaller offences, when added together, should compose a great crime, to which none of them, separately, bore any affinity. He recounted the statutes which distinctly specified all treasonable offences; and which expressly provided that no other crime should be construed into treason. It was in the power of parliament to add other offences to this list; but was it just that he should be condemned on a law subsequently enacted? Or if, as some pretend, constructive or accumulative treason be recognised by our laws, let them produce the evidence of this new, this wonderful discovery.

"Where," said he, "has this fire lain concealed, during so many centuries, that no smoke should discover it, till it thus bursts forth to consume me and my children? Hard it is that a punishment should precede the promulgation of a law, that men should suffer by a law subequent to the deed. If this be admitted, who shall account himself secure in his innocence? And in what is law preferable to the will of an arbitrary master? If I sail on the Thames, and split my vessel on an anchor, should there be no buoy to give me warning, the

owner shall pay me damages: but if it be marked out, then I pass it at my own peril. Where is the mark set on this crime? Where is the token by which I should discover it? If it be hid, if it lie concealed under water, no human foresight or prudence could have prevented my sudden destruction. If we are thus to be beset, let us lay aside all human wisdom, let us rely solely on divine revelation: for certainly nothing less than revelation can save us from these hidden snares.

"It is now full two hundred and forty years since treason was defined; and so long has it been since any man was accused as I am for an alleged crime of this nature. We have lived, my lords, happily to ourselves at home: we have lived gloriously abroad to the world: let us be content with what our fathers have left us: let not our ambition carry us to be more knowing than they were in the art of destroying. Great wisdom will it be in your lordships, for yourselves, for your posterity, for the whole kingdom, to cast from you into the fire these bloody and mysterious volumes of arbitrary and constructive treasons, as the primitive Christians did their books of curious arts; and to betake yourselves to the plain letter of the statute, which distinctly points out where the crime is, and how it is to be avoided. Let us not, to our own destruction, awake those sleeping lions, by shaking

up those musty records, which have lain for so many ages, by the wall, forgotten and neglected.

"To all my afflictions add not this, my lords, the most severe of any; that I, for my other sins, not for my treasons, should be the means of introducing a precedent so fatal in its consequences to the whole kingdom. Do not, through me, wound the commonwealth.

"These gentlemen at the bar, indeed, say, and I believe sincerely, that they speak for the commonwealth: but, under favour, in this particular it is I who speak for the commonwealth. From charges like these of which I am accused, such miseries will in a few years overtake the nation, as are spoken of in the preamble of the statute enacted to prevent them; no man will know what to say, or to do, from the dread of committing treason.

"Impose not, my lords, such difficulties on ministers of state, as to deter them from cheerfully serving their king and country. If you examine them, under such severe penalties, by every grain, by every little weight, the scrutiny will be intolerable. The public affairs of the kingdom must be left waste, and be for ever abandoned by every man who has honour, or fortune, or reputation to lose.

"My lords, I have troubled you much longer than I should have done. Were it not for the in-

terest of those dear pledges which a saint in heaven has left me, I should be loth"—here his weeping stopped him—"what I forfeit for myself is nothing; but I confess, that what I forfeit for them wounds me to the very soul. Pardon my infirmity: something I should have added; but I see I shall not be able, and therefore let it pass.

"And now, my lords, I thank God, by his blessing I have been taught, that the afflictions of this present life are not to be compared with the eternal happiness which awaits us hereafter. And so, my lords, even so, with all humility, and with all tranquillity of mind, I submit myself freely to your judgments; and whether that righteous doom be life or death, I shall, with gratitude and confidence, repose myself on the goodness of my Almighty Preserver." *

"Certainly," says the chairman of the impeaching committee, "never any man acted such a part, on such a theatre, with more wisdom, constancy, and eloquence, with greater reason, judgment, and temper, and with a better grace in all his words and actions, than did this great and excellent person;" and he moved the hearts of all his auditors, some few excepted, to remorse and pity. † But if the

* Strafford's Trial, p. 659, 660. Whitlocke, p. 44. Nalson, Vol. II. p. 122.

† Whitlocke, p. 44.

hearts of his judges were touched by his eloquence, their judgments were farther convinced by the arguments of his counsel, Mr Lane, with regard to the point of law. From his statements, it clearly appeared, that, even after the enactment of the law of treason, in the reign of Edward the Third, men had still been harassed by charges of treason, for offences not specified in that act, but brought within it by construction: that express statutes had been passed in the reigns of Henry the Fourth and Henry the Eighth, to prevent these abuses, and to restrict treason entirely to the specified offences; and that more instances than one had occurred of persons accused of high treason, for offences similar to those of Strafford, and yet, in consequence of these acts, found guilty only of felony. *

Prosecuted by a Bill of Attainder.

The more violent leaders of the Commons were exasperated by this successful resistance. They affected to consider it degrading to their dignity to reply to Strafford's counsel, and they soon showed a determination to effect their object, at the expence of justice, by adopting a proceeding, which overstepped the established forms and maxims of law, and against which innocence could form no protection. Dreading the decision of the Lords, if the charges and evidence were to be weighed by the received rules, they resolved to proceed by a

* Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 671 to 674.

bill of attainder; and to enact, first in their own house, and afterwards in the Lords, that Strafford was guilty of high treason, and merited its punishment. Great was the indignation of the more moderate at a proceeding which, breaking down the fences of the constitution, erected the House of Commons into a tribunal of justice; which took away the most powerful bulwarks of innocence; and which converted into judges the men who had just acted as accusers. In vain was it urged by the accusers, that the safety of the country required such an arbitrary power to be lodged somewhere: the permanent power of condemning men without law was evidently more dangerous to a nation than any individual crime whatever. An offence so heinous as to approach to high treason, might doubtless admit of being punished under some other class of crimes: the charges against Strafford might legally amount to felony or high misdemeanours, and might justify imprisonment, exile, and perpetual removal from the councils of his sovereign.

The Commons, having once outstepped the dictates of equity in their prosecution, were led into proceedings equally absurd and iniquitous. The alleged advice of Strafford to employ the Irish army against England, had hitherto rested on the solitary evidence of Sir Harry Vane; but the laws of treason required two witnesses. The younger

Vane, on inspecting some of his father's papers, discovered a minute, as it appeared, of the consultation, at which the words imputed to Strafford were alleged to have been spoken; and this minute was recognised by the elder Vane as taken down by him at the time, in his quality of secretary. In reporting this discovery to the house, Mr Pym maintained, in a solemn argument, that the written evidence of Sir Harry Vane at the period of the transaction, and his oral evidence at present, ought to be considered as equivalent to the testimony of two witnesses: and this extravagant position was actually sanctioned by the house, and adopted as a ground of their proceedings. *

Bill passed in the House of Commons.

Several members, even among the personal enemies of Strafford, remonstrated against this complicated injustice; and Lord Digby, a distinguished leader, who had signalized himself by his active prosecution of the impeachment, exposed in glowing colours the iniquity of measures revolting to his honour and conscience. † But a large majority would listen to nothing but the destruction of their dreaded adversary: and with only fifty-nine dissenting voices, the bill of attainder was passed. It was accompanied by the remarkable clause, that nothing done in the present case should hereafter

* Strafford's Trial. Whitlocke, p. 43. Clarendon, Vol. I.
† Strafford's Trial, p. 50.

be drawn into a precedent.* After being precipitately hurried through the house, it was presented to the Lords with an address which expressed all the virulence of the prosecutors. St John, who spoke on this occasion, asserted, that, in this process of attainder, it was sufficient if their lordships were convinced in their own minds, though no evidence at all had been adduced: and as to the appeal of the culprit to the laws, "it is true," said he, "we give law to hares and deers, for they are beasts of chace; but as to beasts of prey, as to foxes and wolves, it never was accounted either cruelty or foul play to knock them on the head, wherever they can be found." †

The Lords, more attached to the court, and dreading the effects of so violent a precedent, were neither moved by these arguments, nor inspired with these passions, and seemed not unwilling to let the bill of attainder rest undiscussed on their table. But the popular leaders were not without means to accelerate its progress. As a warning to the Lords, the names of the fifty-nine commoners, who had voted against the bill of attainder, were posted up in conspicuous places, with this superscription, *The Straffordians, the men who, to save a traitor, would betray their country.* ‡ The

* Strafford's Trial, p. 757.

† Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 703. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 232.

‡ May, p. 86.

Commons recommenced their inquiries into abuses; and by an exposition of the illegal instructions and proceedings of the council of York, highly aggravated the popular clamour against Strafford. The meaner actors in the revolutionary drama now began to appear; alarms were diffused that dangerous conspiracies were entered into by the Catholics; that great multitudes of them were assembling in Lancashire; that they held secret meetings in caves, and under-ground in Surry; that they had framed a plot, to blow up the Thames with gunpowder, and destroy the city by the inundation; that great provisions of arms were making beyond sea for their enterprises; * and that all these designs originated with the arch-traitor, whose forfeited life was still spared for new treasons. Such rumours, indeed, were credited only by the vulgar, but the more intelligent were thrown into consternation by the discovery of some crude and abortive attempts to facilitate the escape of Strafford, and bring up the army to London for the support of the king against the Parliament. The Commons, as if agitated with the most fearful presages, hastened to draw up an oath for the defence of the constitution, which they solemnly took themselves, and enjoined on the rest of the nation. †

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 249.

† Clarendon, Vol. I. Strafford's Trial, p. 735. Whitlocke, p. 45.

Charles eagerly embraced every expedient to save the life of his minister. To abate the violence of the popular leaders, he promoted some of them to the most conspicuous stations in the government; but as they ascribed their honours to the support of the Parliament, they continued more subservient to that body than to him. By the advice of Lord Say, one of those new counsellors, he now repaired to the House of Lords, and attempted to defeat the bill of attainder, by assuring them it was vain to expect his assent to a measure which his conscience could not approve; that no fear, no consideration whatever should make him adjudge Strafford guilty of treason. He acknowledged, however, that the earl had been convicted of such high misdemeanours as disqualified him from ever holding any public trust, even that of a high constable; and declared his readiness to concur in an act to render him utterly incapable of bearing any office. *

On hearing of this intended interference, Strafford had earnestly dissuaded it; † and on learning that the step had been actually taken, he no longer encouraged a hope of preservation. ‡ His presages were fatally true. No sooner had the king quitted the House of Lords, than the Commons, in a

* Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 734. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 255.
† Clarendon, ibid. ‡ Radcliffe.

transport of impatience, declared this last act of his majesty an unparalleled breach of privilege: that if the king might thus notice the bills passing in Parliament, and forejudge their counsels by declaring his own opinion, it would be impossible to enact salutary laws, or reform the abuses of the government. They called on those who had taken the oath in support of the constitution to rally round the Parliament, and not suffer its privileges to be thus wantonly violated. *

Passed in the House of Lords.

The passions of the Commons were communicated to the multitude without; and next day, vast crowds surrounded the House of Peers, crying aloud for justice. As the Lords passed along, the names of the traitorous Straffordians were sounded in their ears; and those suspected of being hostile to the bill were even pressed and jostled so rudely as to endanger their persons. † There was no longer room for resistance or delay. Out of fourscore lords who had been present during the whole trial, only forty-six now ventured to attend; and when the bill at length came to a vote, it was carried with eleven dissenting voices. ‡

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* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 256. † Ibid.

‡ Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 256. The Lords proceeded in passing the bill of attainder after the same manner as if the impeachment had been persisted in. They voted Strafford guilty on two articles: the fifteenth, "for levying money in Ireland by force in a warlike manner;" and the nineteenth, "for imposing an illegal oath on

The cries, which had proved so powerful in Westminster Hall, now resounded, with redoubled fury, around the palace; and the king began to dread that himself and his family might fall victims to the populace. He summoned his privy-counsellors to devise means for his safety; and they declared no other could be found but his assent to the death of Strafford: he represented the violence which he should thus impose on his conscience; and they referred him to the bishops, the interpreters of conscientious scruples. The prelates, trembling under their own apprehensions, earnestly concurred in the advice of the privy-counsellors. The Archbishop of York was at no loss for casuistry to justify this measure: he contended, "that a king had a public conscience, and a private conscience, and that the latter ought always to yield to the former: that the conscience of a king to preserve his kingdom, the conscience of a husband to preserve his wife, the conscience of a father to preserve his children, all of which were now in danger, ought abundantly to outweigh the conscience of a master or a friend, to preserve his friend or his servant: that therefore the king was bound, even for conscience sake, to ratify the

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the subjects of Ireland." Whitlocke, p. 45. These, therefore, were the grounds on which the Lords condemned Strafford to die.

bill of attainder." * Juxon alone vindicated the dignity of his order, by telling the king he ought not to sanction a measure which his conscience could not approve. †

Strafford's letter to the king.

Strafford, informed of the struggle which the king's honour and conscience maintained with the apprehensions and entreaties which encompassed him, resolved to give a new proof of his magnanimity and devotion. He wrote to the king, reminding him of his loyalty and his innocence; and stating the severe contests which he had undergone between the ruin of himself and his family, and the imminent dangers of his sovereign; between the things most desired, most dreaded by men, between life and death. He had, however, at length formed the resolution which best became him: and, therefore, besought his majesty to give his sanction to the bill of attainder. "In this," added he, "my consent shall more acquit you to God than all the world can do besides. To a willing man there is no injury." ‡

Bill sanctioned by the king.

The magnanimity of this letter made little impression on the courtiers who surrounded the king: they urged that the free consent of Strafford to his own death absolved his majesty from every scruple

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* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 257.

† Nalson, Vol. II. p. 193. Father Orleans, p. 39.

‡ Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 774. Whitlocke, p. 45.

of conscience.* The resolution of Charles was at length overpowered; and he gave, by commission, his assent to the death of his faithful minister. †

Strafford was aware that his life was in the hands of his enemies; that no chance of escape remained: but he was not prepared to expect a dereliction by his sovereign. When Secretary Carleton waited on him with the intelligence, and stated his own consent as the circumstance which had chiefly moved the king; the astonished prisoner inquired, if his majesty had indeed sanctioned the bill? And when assured of the fatal truth, he raised his eyes to heaven, and, laying his hand on his heart, exclaimed, "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men: for in them there is no salvation." ‡

Preparations for death.

But he soon resumed his wonted fortitude, and began to prepare for his fate: the short interval of three days was allowed him, and he employed it in the concerns of his friends and his family. He humbly petitioned the House of Lords to have compassion on his innocent children. He wrote his last instructions to his eldest son, exhorting him to be obedient and grateful to those entrusted with his education; to be sincere and faithful towards his sovereign, if he should ever be called

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 258. † Strafford's Trial, p. 755.
‡ Whitlocke, p. 46.

into public service: and as he foresaw that the revenues of the church would be despoiled, he charged him to take no part in a sacrilege which would assuredly be followed by the curse of heaven.* He shed tears over the untimely fate of Wandesford, whom he had entrusted with the care of his government and of his family; and who, on learning the dangers of his friend and patron, had fallen a victim to grief and despair. In a parting letter to his wife, he endeavoured to support her courage; and expressed a hope that his successor, Lord Dillon, would behave with tenderness to her and her orphans. On being refused an interview with Sir George Ratcliffe and Archbishop Laud, his fellow prisoners in the Tower, he conveyed a tender adieu to the one, and to the other an earnest request for his prayers and his parting blessing.† If his feelings were deeply touched by these remembrances, they were still more painfully wounded by a letter from the man whom, of all others, he had most severely injured. The Earl of Mountnorris recounted the hardships which he had undergone, the ruin of his fortune, the distresses of his family: he forgave Strafford for being the author of all these calamities, but entreated that he would not leave the world without in some degree

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 782.
† Rushworth, ibid.

repairing the injustice, by making it known that these sufferings had been undeserved. *

During this interval, the king, dissatisfied with himself, looked around for some expedient to save the life of Strafford. He sent for Hollis, the Earl's brother-in-law, who acted with the popular leaders, but had taken no share in the present prosecution; and demanded what could be done for the preservation of his kinsman. Hollis advised that Strafford should petition his majesty for a short respite to settle his affairs; and that the king should next day go to the House of Peers, with this petition in his hands, and request that their Lordships would consent to change of the minister's punishment from death to perpetual imprisonment; and that they would endeavour to procure the consent of the Commons to this mitigation. † At the king's desire, Hollis made out a draught of a speech; and hastened to exert all his influence in procuring the acquiescence of the popular leaders. He succeeded with several, and had sanguine hopes of being able, with the assistance of the court party, to accomplish his purpose. But Strafford had unrelenting enemies at court, who found means to represent to the queen, that he had bargained for

* Clarendon's State Papers, Vol. II. p. 135.

† Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 757.

his own life, by a promise to accuse her, and betray her counsels. Under this persuasion, which her ancient enmity made her easily receive, she prevailed on the king to lay aside his intention of repairing to the House of Lords; to convey his requests to them in a letter sent by the hands of the Prince of Wales; and even to abandon his whole proposal, by adding this cold and indifferent postscript, *If he must die, it were charity to reprieve him till Saturday.* And hence, when the requests of the letter came to be considered by the peers, the court party united with their most violent enemies in procuring its rejection. *

Execution. Wednesday, May 12, 1641.

The day of Strafford's execution threw a brighter lustre over his name than his most memorable actions. As he quitted the Tower, he looked up to the windows of Laud's apartments, and seeing the aged prelate, who had come to take a last leave of his friend, entreated his prayers and his blessing. The archbishop, lifting up his hands, gave a fervent benediction; and, overcome with the scene, fell motionless on the ground. "Farewell, my lord," cried Strafford, "God protect your innocence." † As he passed along to Tower-hill, on which the scaffold was erected, the populace eager-

* Burnet, Hist. Vol. I. p. 41, 42.

† Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 762. Nalson, Vol. II.

ly thronged to the spectacle, and beheld his noble deportment with admiration. His figure was tall and stately, his features grave and dignified: the mildness which had taken place of the usual severity of his forehead expressed repentance enlivened by hope and fortitude tempered by resignation. In the multitude around him he saw nothing to damp his courage, or disturb his composure; the same men who had so loudly demanded his death, now gazed in profound silence on the intrepid victim. He looked on them with complacence; and, frequently taking off his hat, bowed to the spectators on either hand. * In his address to the people from the scaffold, he assured them that he submitted to his sentence with perfect resignation; that, freely and from his heart, he forgave all the world. "I speak," said he, "in the presence of Almighty God, before whom I stand, there is not a displeasing thought that ariseth in me to any man." He declared that, however his actions might have been misinterpreted, his intentions had always been upright: that he was attached to parliaments; that he was devoted to the constitution and to the church of England: that he ever considered the interests of the king and people as inseparably united: and that, living or dying, the prosperity

* Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 772, 773.

of his country was his fondest wish. But he expressed his fears that it augured ill for the people's happiness, to write the commencement of a reformation in letters of blood. Turning to the friends who attended him on the scaffold, he took solemn leave, and charged his brother with his blessing and final adieu to his wife and children. "And now," said he, "I have nigh done. One stroke will make my wife a widow, my dear children fatherless, deprive my poor servants of their beloved master, and separate me from my affectionate brother and all my friends. But let God be to you, and to them, all in all." While he disrobed himself, he declared "that he looked on the approach of death without any apprehension; and that he now laid his head on the block with the same tranquillity as he had ever laid it on his pillow." He stretched out his hand as a signal to the executioner; and, at one blow, his head was severed from his body.*

Thus perished the Earl of Strafford, in the forty-ninth year of his age, accompanied by the admiration of all who witnessed his end, and by the mingled reproaches and lamentations of the rest of his countrymen. The circumstances of his death, however unhappy, at least proved fortunate

* Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 759, 760, 761.

to his memory. Had his offences not been magnified beyond truth; had he, under the pressure of a just sentence, wasted the remainder of his days in exile or in the languid obscurity of a prison, he would have had little claim on the sympathy of the world: but had he escaped from the hands of his enemies, and by some daring enterprise, given the first signal for civil convulsions, he would have caused the good and the wise to join in a common prayer for his overthrow. But his accusers, by the unjust means employed to effect his destruction, turned the eyes of mankind from his trespasses to their own; and at length produced applause where they meant to excite detestation. They doomed their victim to a fate which could not fail to excite commiseration; and they placed him on a theatre where his fortitude and lofty demeanour assumed the character of transcendent virtues. To the tragical termination of his own life, Charles reproached himself with the weakness which had sacrificed his most able and faithful minister.* Even the parliament, a few weeks after his death, mitigated the most severe consequences of their sen-

* In a letter to the Earl of Clarendon from Newcastle, Charles expresses his deep contrition for "that base, unworthy concession concerning Strafford; for which," he adds, "I have been most justly punished." Clarendon's State Papers, Vol. II. p. 296.

tence to his children; and, in a succeeding reign, the attainder was reversed, the proceedings obliterated from the public records, and his son restored to all his fortune and honours.

Freeman sc.

Edward Hyde

Earl of Clarendon

EDWARD HYDE,

EARL OF CLARENDON.

Of the illustrious men, whose talents were called into action by the civil wars, few have transmitted to posterity a more respected name than Edward Hyde. He was descended from a family which inherited the estate of Norbury in Cheshire, from the times of the Saxon monarchy. His own birth-place was Dinton in Wiltshire, where his father, though a younger brother, enjoyed a competent fortune. His early education was conducted at home, under the tuition of an able teacher: but his principal improvement arose from the care and conversation of his father, who had travelled in his youth, and now delighted to communicate to his son his observations on the appearance and manners of different countries. *

Birth. February 18, 1609.

Edward, being a younger son, was destined for the church; and, with this view, was sent to the university of Oxford in his fourteenth year. But, on the death of his elder brother, which soon after

Education at Oxford; 1624.

* Clarendon's Life, by himself. Edit. 1759, p. 6.

took place, his destination was altered; and he was now designed for the more flattering, though less certain, profession of the law. He quitted the university with the reputation rather of talents than of industry; and from some dangerous habits, particularly that of drinking, in which he had been initiated, he afterwards looked on his early removal as not the least fortunate incident of his life. *

In the Temple.

He commenced his professional studies in the Middle Temple, under the direction of his uncle, Sir Nicholas Hyde, then treasurer of that society, and soon afterwards Chief Justice of the King's Bench. The advantages of this connection were for some time rendered fruitless by illness: an attack of small-pox endangered his life, and an aguish complaint obliged him, for upwards of a year, to relinquish his studies. Nor was his application considerable even after his negligence had no longer an apology from the want of health.

1627. As London was at that time full of young officers, who were to be employed in the Duke of Buckingham's enterprises against France and Spain, Hyde found among them a society more agreeable to his taste and habits than among his fellow-students: and another year was lost amidst the pleasures of dissipation. When these dangerous companions were removed by peace, he still felt little inclina-

* Life, p. 7.

tion to immure himself amidst the records of the law. He was fond of polite literature, and particularly attached to the Latin classics; he therefore bestowed only so much attention on his less agreeable professional studies as was sufficient to save his credit with his uncle. *

The death of this relative seemed to deprive him of many advantages: but he had now resolved to attend more seriously to his principal objects; and, without abandoning either that literature or that conversation in which he delighted, to devote himself chiefly to the business of his profession. To recall, as he informs us, those wandering desires which render the mind inconstant and irresolute, he resolved to enter into the married state: but his first pursuit, which had merely a convenient estate for its object, was unsuccessful, yet produced no lasting uneasiness. In his next advances, his heart was more deeply interested. He married the daughter of Sir George Ayliffe, a young lady very beautiful and nobly connected; but, after the enjoyment of only six months of happiness, he had the affliction to see her suddenly ravished from him by the small-pox. The despondency produced by this misfortune for some time unfitted him for any active exertion; and only the authority of his father, to whom he ever paid implicit obedience,

Marriage, 1628.

* Life, p. 8, 9.

could restrain him from going abroad to indulge more freely in his melancholy. Three years elapsed before the utmost importunity of his friends could induce him to turn his thoughts to another union; when this young widower, who had not yet passed his twenty-fourth year, at length married the daughter of Sir Thomas Aylesbury, Master of
1632. Requests to the king; and by her he had afterwards a numerous progeny. *

Success at the bar.

The success of Hyde, on his appearance at the bar, greatly surpassed the expectations of his contemporaries. He had, indeed, been very punctual in the performance of all those public exercises to which he was bound by the rules of the profession: but his habits, his society, his studies, seemed to indicate that he had in view some other course of life. He seldom dined in the hall of his inn, and there were few of his own profession with whom he maintained more than a formal acquaintance. But he had been careful to form connections which procured him a higher estimation, and which contributed much more directly to his success. He had laid it down as a rule, to be always found in the best company; and to attain, by every honourable means, an intimate friendship with the most considerable persons of the kingdom. While only a student of law, he enjoyed the socie-

* Life, p. 11, 12, 15.

ty of Ben Jonson, the most celebrated wit of that age; of Selden, the most skilled of all English lawyers in the ancient constitution and history of his country; of May, a distinguished scholar, and afterwards the historian of the parliament; of Sir Kenelm Digby, who was equally noted and acceptable in the camp and the court. Among those whom he had bound to himself by the most intimate ties of friendship, he could recount some of the most learned and celebrated divines, at a period when the clergy enjoyed peculiar distinction, and the church was an object of ambition; Sheldon, Morley, Earles, Hales, and, above all, Chillingworth, whose amiable qualities rendered him as beloved by his friends, as his controversial talents caused him to be feared by his antagonists; Edmund Waller, who was not less admired by his contemporaries as an orator, than by posterity as a poet, was also among his intimate associates: but the friend whom he regarded with the most tender attachment, and the most unqualified admiration, was Sir Lucius Carey, afterwards Lord Falkland, whom he delights to describe as the most accomplished gentleman, scholar, and statesman of his age. *

Nor did he neglect to form an intimacy with those who occupied a more prominent station in

* Life, p. 30, 37, 59.

the eyes of the world. His zealous endeavours to procure reparation for a near relative of his first wife, a lady of high quality, whose reputation had been sullied in an amour, introduced him to a familiar intercourse with all her connections, persons of the first distinction at court: and, among others, with the Marquis of Hamilton, at that time the principal favourite of the king. From his reception by Lord Coventry, by the Earls of Pembroke, Manchester, Holland, and the other principal officers of the court, he found a great increase of consequence accrue to him in Westminster Hall; but what most contributed to his political influence was a friendship which he found means to cultivate with Archbishop Laud. After the death of Weston, Earl of Portland, the treasury was put into the hands of commissioners; and Laud, being among the number, proceeded with his usual industry to examine into the state of the customs, and discovered some instances in which the late lord treasurer had greatly harassed the merchants for the benefit of some favoured officers of the revenue. While his grace anxiously investigated this subject, Hyde was accidentally mentioned to him as a lawyer with whom the merchants had consulted on the means of relief, and who could give him the fullest information. An interview was the consequence of this intimation; and so high an opinion did Laud conceive of the young counsellor's talents,

that he expressed a desire to see him frequently, employed him on several occasions of consequence, and took every opportunity to make known the esteem in which he held him. *

Such countenance from the prime minister procured him the most flattering reception in his profession. He was treated by the judges, and the more eminent counsellors, with a consideration to which no other lawyer of his years could pretend; and clients became anxious to place their causes in the hands of a man who enjoyed such general reputation. He soon obtained considerable business, and might have procured much more; but he had determined that the thirst of money should not deprive him of those friendships and relaxations, without which life would have lost its sweetest attractions. He contrived, by a proper distribution of his time, to enjoy these pleasures, with as little hindrance as possible to his professional avocations. The hours of dinner, (which, at that period, were seldom later than twelve or one o'clock,) he always gave to the society of his friends; and by that means continued to retain all his more valued intimacies. The morning was occupied in the courts of law; and the afternoon he dedicated to the business of his profession, to taking instructions, and Habits.

* Life, p. 13, 27, 60.

forming his opinions. Yet he never suffered himself to be deprived of some hours, which he devoted to his favourite literature, and which he usually borrowed from sleep, or from leisure procured by habitually abstaining from supper. The vacations he gave wholly to literature and conversation; nor did he ever spend any of those intervals on the more lucrative occupations of the circuits. When he quitted London during two months of the summer, it was only to retire to his country seat in Wiltshire, where his neighbours eagerly resorted to partake of his hospitality. *

He thus continued for some years to enjoy a life every way to his satisfaction. His domestic comfort was secured by a wife, who entirely dedicated herself to his views; and by a promising family of three sons and a daughter, whom she brought him during this happy interval. Hyde was of a disposition to enter thoroughly into the enjoyments of social life. A competent fortune which he derived from inheritance, and an unusually rapid success in his profession, enabled him to live in a far more splendid style than was customary with lawyers. † In the company of Lord Conway, and some other noted epicures of that age, he had acquired a full relish for the pleasures of the table; and as he discoursed learnedly on these topics, he might have

* Life, p. 28. † Life, p. 66, 68.

been suspected of excesses in which he did not indulge.

It must, however, be recorded to his honour, that he won the countenance of the great by no improper compliances, or degrading flattery. He made no scruple in expressing his opinions, even when he knew they would prove unacceptable. Of this an instance is recorded in his intercourse with Archbishop Laud. The primate's habitual manner was that of a man who means well, but deems it superfluous to pay any regard to the ordinary civilities of life. His want of breeding perpetually disgusted those who approached him; and raised him up innumerable enmities. Hyde, who was aware of the archbishop's rectitude, and who concluded that his indiscreet conduct proceeded from the want of an advising friend, took a fit opportunity to mention to his grace the general prejudice which his harsh carriage excited; and to state some late instances in which his seeming haughtiness had given offence. Laud took this admonition in good part; defended himself on the ground of his good intentions, yet allowed the infirmity of his temper; and from that time forward received Hyde with increased kindness and familiarity. *

* Life, p. 63. See the character of Laud by Hyde in the Appendix, p. vii.

The estimation which our young counsellor might have lost among the grave and prudent, by the dissipation of his youth, he soon recovered by the evidence which he gave of a staid and sober judgment. He was observed to have become thoroughly enamoured of the business of his profession: and while he attracted around him persons of distinction by the liberality of his expenditure, he still increased his estate by some convenient purchases of land. Although naturally proud and passionate, and much given to disputation, yet so well had he subdued these vices of his temper by the influence of reflection and good company, that he now appeared affable, courteous, and obliging. The zeal which he manifested both for the doctrine and the worship of the established church, and the attachment which he expressed to the king, secured to him the favour of the most powerful body in the state: people spoke with applause of his liberality, of the firmness of his friendships, and of his unblemished integrity. *

In parliament, 1640.

Such was the happy and respectable condition in which Hyde was overtaken by the first commotions of the civil wars. Being chosen a member of the parliament which met in April 1640, he did not suffer his known attachment to the court to prevent him from contributing his endeavours for the reforma-

* Life, p. 69.

tion of the abuses, with which the subjects were grievously oppressed. In his first speech, he denounced the Marshal's Court, a court which had of late years begun to take cognizance of disrespectful words to the higher orders of the state, and had been guilty of various acts of oppression not less wanton than intolerable.* His severe exposure of this absurd and odious tribunal acquired him much repute among the friends of reformation. †

It was with deep regret that he perceived the intention of the court to break with this parliament. He had almost procured a resolution favourable to the question of supplies, when the peremptory demand for twelve subsidies, which Sir Harry Vane

* Some curious instances of the vexatious proceedings of this court are mentioned in the speech of Hyde. A waterman, who demanded an exorbitant fare from a citizen, having met with a refusal, pointed to a badge on his coat; and, being desired by the citizen to be gone *with his goose,* complained of the insult to the Marshal's Court. Here the unfortunate citizen found that the badge which he had mistaken for a *goose* was in fact a *swan,* and the crest of an earl, whose retainer the waterman was; and for this grievous insult to nobility, he was subjected to such excessive damages as caused his ruin. On another occasion, a gentleman, having been waited on by his tailor, to demand a considerable sum of money, which had been long due, replied only by bad words, and attempted to thrust the importunate creditor out of doors. The tailor, irritated by this usage, ventured to tell him that he was as good a man as himself: upon which he was summoned before the Marshal's Court, and glad to give up all his demands in lieu of damages.

† Life, p. 72.

made in the king's name, threw every thing into confusion. * He afterwards endeavoured to prevail on Laud to interpose his influence with the king against the fatal design of a dissolution; but he found the archbishop possessed with too bad an opinion of the Commons to become a mediator. †

In parliament, Nov. 3, 1640.

In the long parliament, which met towards the close of the same year, he found his known opinions and connections far from acceptable. His attachment to Archbishop Laud, and his devotion to the established ecclesiastical government, were unpromising circumstances to those who meditated the overthrow of the prelate, and considerable changes in the church. Some fruitless attempts were made to find a flaw in his election, and to excite jealousies between him and his friends: but the leaders of the popular party were at length contented to dissemble their animosity, and soften his opposition by civilities. ‡

Patriotic loyalty.

From the manner in which the court and the nation stood affected to each other, Hyde perceived that important political discussions were now at hand; he, therefore, from the commencement of this parliament, laid aside his gown, and devoted himself wholly to public business. By standing forth the resolute advocate of what he considered the established law, and by equally opposing the

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 109. Folio edit. 1702.
† Life, p. 75. ‡ Ibid. p. 76.

encroachments of the court and of the people, he soon obtained consideration with all moderate men; and was, without suspicion of partiality, employed as chairman of the most important committees. He now procured the annihilation of the Marshal's Court: * and having been appointed chairman of the committee for investigating the abuses of the council of York, he did not permit his regard for Strafford to prevent him from exposing, in glowing colours, the enormous oppressions to which the northern counties had been subjected by that jurisdiction. † Every one admired the conscientious part which Hyde acted on this occasion, as it evidently contributed to increase that indignation against the Earl, which, from personal feelings, he would have been glad to diminish. With equal rectitude and zeal, he conducted the impeachment of three Barons of the Exchequer, for iniquitous decisions in support of exactions imposed by royal authority in defiance of law. ‡

A most important change had now taken place in the relative situation of the king and the parliament. Charles had not only failed in his attempt to render himself independent of that assembly, but had brought himself into a situation of

* Whitlocke, p. 51.

† Rushworth, Vol. IV. p. 230. Lives of the Lords Chancellor, Vol. I. p. 6. ‡ Ibid.

such extreme difficulty, that he had now only to choose between a recourse to force or unlimited compliance. For the former he was not prepared; and by the latter he soon became divested of his original rank in the constitution. The parliament knew that necessity alone extorted from him his present concessions, and they dreaded that he would seize the first opportunity of resuming what he had so reluctantly granted. They seemed resolved, therefore, to reduce his power within very narrow limits, and with this view judged it necessary that they themselves should be invested with exorbitant authority. By the act which rendered the parliament indissoluble unless by their own consent, they became entirely independent of the king; and the government was, in fact, converted into an irresistible oligarchy.

Hyde, with Lord Falkland and other moderate men, had concurred in the salutary acts which were passed at the commencement of this parliament, for the redress of many enormous grievances. But when they perceived that the fears of some men, and the ambition of others, induced them to draw more power into their hands than was consistent with the ancient constitution of the country, these loyal patriots took the alarm, and began to resist every change which could affect the prerogative. Hyde distinguished himself conspicuously in opposing encroachments on the privileges of the

church. At the commencement of this parliament, there appeared no intention of introducing an alteration into the form of the established church government; Lord Say seemed the only leader in either house who regarded that form with animosity.* But the bishops, from the arbitrary maxims of government which they had abetted, and from their late oppressive proceedings in the court of high commissson, had made themselves a number of enemies, and came gradually to be ranked among the decided opponents of the parliament. At first it was proposed to deprive them of their seats in the House of Peers; but, at a subsequent period, motions were entertained for the utter extirpation of episcopacy. All such propositions were strenuously resisted by Hyde. It was contended by those who desired to deprive the bishops of their seats in paliament, that the clergy were represented in the house of convocation, the proper assembly

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 145. Clarendon, from his personal knowledge of the parliamentary leaders and their views, assures us that, at the commencement of the long parliament, few of the members were disaffected to the church, and none seemed to entertain a prospect of its subversion. Even after the war had commenced, he tells us that "designs against the church were not yet grown popular in the two houses." Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 51. At the treaty of Uxbridge, he represents the English commissioners as zealous in the business of religion, merely to gratify their Scottish allies. Ibid. p. 448. In short, it seems uniformly his opinion, that the religious quarrel sprung out of the civil.

for debating ecclesiastical subjects; that there was no adequate reason for allowing this profession, this class of public officers alone, their peculiar representatives in parliament; and that the whole of this privilege had its foundation in an age of superstition, when the claims of ecclesiastics admitted of no resistance. But Hyde maintained that the antiquity of the privilege was an irrefragable argument in its favour; that the temporal rights of the bishops were interwoven with the elements of our constitution; and that they could not be taken away without removing indispensable land-marks. Being appointed chairman of the committee to consider of the abolition of episcopacy, he contrived to interpose so many delays and difficulties in the proceedings, that the reformers at length grew weary, and for the present abandoned the project.*

Sent to the Tower.

His exertions in favour of the royal cause were not always unattended with personal hazard. The Commons having drawn up a remonstrance, in which they detailed all the grievances under which the nation had laboured, even those which had been redressed; Hyde formally protested against a measure that could have no other object than to inflame the animosity of the people against the king. Protests, though usual in the House of Peers,

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 216.

had never been admitted by the Commons; and for this offence he was, for some days, committed to the Tower.*

The same occasion, however, brought him into a more intimate connection with the monarch. Introduction to the king. Charles, who could not overlook his zealous exertions in behalf of the prerogative, had already sent for him privately, and returned his acknowledgments for a support which he had in vain expected from his own immediate servants. His majesty was now presented by Lord Digby with a full answer to the remonstrance of the Parliament, which Hyde, finding his protest in vain, had drawn up, and shown in confidence to his friend, without any intention of its being made further known. †, Digby, however, took the first opportunity of expatiating on its merits to the king, who accordingly requested the paper from Hyde, and published it as the reply of the king and the council, concealing the name of the real author, at his own earnest desire. ‡

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* Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 249.

† Lord Digby had distinguished himself as a leader of the popular party, but, on the question of Strafford's attainder, had dissented from them, and gone afterwards decidedly over to the court. His subsequent conduct showed him better qualified for an opposition orator than for a minister; since his rash counsels frequently proved very prejudicial to the interests of his master.

‡ Life, p. 87.

Confidential employment.

But it soon became necessary that he should take a more active and decided part in support of government. The king was now without a single minister in the House of Commons, who had either the courage or the inclination to stand forth as the advocate of his claims. He therefore resolved to confer the offices of state on those men, who, without any connection with the government, were daily incurring reproach and danger in its defence. Lord Falkland, who had hitherto held no direct intercourse with the court, was, to his surprise, nominated principal secretary of state; an office which he would have declined, had not Hyde, his most intimate friend, represented to him the irreparable injury which he would bring on the king's affairs, if he gave countenance to the opinion that the court was too vicious, or its condition too desperate, to receive the support of wise and virtuous men. The chancellorship of the exchequer was given to Sir John Colepepper, another independent royalist: and it was intended to deprive St John, one of the king's most bitter enemies, of the office of solicitor-general, and to confer it on Hyde. To this proposition, however, Hyde absolutely refused his assent. He represented, that the displacing of St John would only serve to exasperate the Parliament; and that he himself could render much more effectual service to his majesty, by continuing his independent exertions,

than by appearing in any official character. To these reasons the king assented; but at the same time committed to Hyde, in conjunction with Falkland and Colepepper, the whole management of his affairs in the House of Commons, with a solemn assurance that he would take no step relating to Parliament without their advice and approbation. *

But Charles on this, as on other occasions, was incapable of adhering to prudent and consistent resolutions. The new counsellors had the mortification to see a step immediately taken, without any communication with them, which rendered all their future exertions fruitless, and a civil war inevitable. The queen, a woman of a rash and violent temper, who, from her education in the court of France, had imbibed the most arbitrary notions of monarchical power, was perpetually urging her husband to confound his rebellious subjects by bold and decisive measures. The invention of Lord Digby, who was now become her favourite minister, soon suggested an attempt suitable to these counsels. By his advice, the king, who too readily entered into all precipitate designs, suddenly caused a peer and five commoners to be impeach-

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 267, 269. Life, p. 88, 89. See in Appendix, the characters of Lord Digby and St John, as given by Hyde; also those of Hambden and Pym.

ed of high treason; and accompanied this charge with a demand that they should immediately be delivered up to him for trial. The Commons, more indignant than appalled, merely replied by a message to his majesty, that the persons impeached should be forthcoming as soon as a legal charge was produced against them: but it was resolved at court, that the king, to follow up the measure with proper boldness, should next day go in person to the House, and seize on the accused members. Charles might have hesitated at so dangerous a proposal, but his resolution was speedily confirmed by the irresistible reproaches of his queen and the ladies of the court. When he presented himself in the House, he had the mortification to find, according to his own expression, that "the birds were flown;" and retired from his abortive attempt amidst loud and indignant cries of *Privilege! Privilege!* *

The consequences of this rash action were never retrieved. The Parliament had long apprehended that the king would, according to his custom on former dissolutions, take vengeance, by imprisonment, on those who had maintained an active opposition. But they now saw him, even while they continued to sit, attempting to inflict capital pun-

* Whitlocke, p. 52. Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 282. Rushworth, Vol. IV. p. 478.

ishment on the popular advocates. The accused members were charged with an attempt to subvert the fundamental laws of the kingdom: but in the particular acts, on which this charge rested, many more had been equally implicated. Every one, therefore, took the accusation of the five members as a warning to himself; and the more active opposers of the court from thenceforward saw no safety for themselves, but in depriving the monarch of the power to injure.

Grieved and dispirited by such irretrievable errors, Hyde, with his colleagues, continued the melancholy task of supporting a cause which every day became more hopeless. He assures us, that both he and Falkland were of opinion that the king would be overwhelmed by his enemies; and that they engaged in the royal cause solely from a sense of duty, and with a full persuasion that this course would terminate in their own ruin. As Hyde was employed in no official capacity, and desired to appear an independent supporter of the court, he could repair to the king only by stealth: and the monarch was at times reduced to the painful necessity of meeting his faithful advocate at midnight on the back-stairs of the palace.* His task was both laborious and dangerous: he was engaged to write answers, in the king's name, to

* Life, p. 105, 106.

all the declarations of the Parliament, which soon became extremely numerous. These delicate transactions afforded an instance of the secrecy and industry of which Charles was capable on particular occasions. As it would have proved very dangerous to Hyde, had he been known as the author of these replies, it was resolved that the secret, which was known only to his friends Falkland and Colepepper, should not be communicated to any other person whatever. * Charles, therefore, when he removed to a distance from these counsellors, was under the necessity of transcribing all the voluminous replies with his own hand, before he presented them to his council; a task which he performed for many months, though it often cost him the labour of two or three days together, and frequently interfered with the hours of sleep. †

Though the assistance which Hyde rendered to the court was concealed with the utmost caution, yet he had now become violently suspected by the popular leaders. Some of his private interviews with the king had been accidentally detected; and it was discovered that two of the ministers, Falkland and Colepepper, repaired nightly to his house

* Falkland and Colepepper remained with Hyde in London for a considerable time after the king had quitted the Parliament and retired to York.

† Life, p. 108.

to hold private consultations. The unusual portion of time which he now devoted to his closet, combined with these circumstances, infused a suspicion that he was the author of the king's declarations; and a resolution was privately taken to deprive the royal cause of his obnoxious services, by committing him and his two associates to the Tower. This danger he for some time found means to elude; but at length he perceived it necessary to quit London, and repair to York, where the king had now assembled his court, and employed himself in appealing to the nation against the Parliament. *

Hyde now openly entered into the service of the king, but did not for some time occupy any official situation. He resisted an intention of his majesty

April 1642. Chancellor of the Exchequer.

* Life, p. 113—120. A singular incident happened to Hyde, on his arrival at York. A lodging had been prepared for his reception as a person belonging to the court, in the house of a respectable man, who expressed much satisfaction at having the adherents of the king for his inmates. But on being informed of the name of his new lodger, the landlord suddenly burst forth into violent rage, and swore he would sooner set his house on fire than suffer such a person to lodge under his roof. The servants of Hyde stood amazed at the implacable wrath which now seemed to transport the whole family; and Hyde himself was equally astonished, as he had never before visited York, nor, to his recollection, injured any of its inhabitants. The mystery, however, was quickly removed, when he discovered that his landlord had been an attorney of the Council of York, where he had earned a handsome income, till the Parliament, and Hyde, more conspicuously than any other member, had procured the abolition of that court.

to make room for his appointment as secretary of state, by the removal of another minister to a less profitable office; and he waited with patience till the promotion of Sir John Colepepper to the mastership of the rolls, left vacant for him the office
March 1643. of Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was at the same time knighted, and sworn of the privy council; and he reflected with satisfaction, that this preferment had been obtained without any connection with the cabals of the court, and even without the privity of the queen. *

While any prospect remained of terminating the contest between the king and the parliament otherwise than by the sword, Hyde, with Falkland and Colepepper, continued their united exertions in the royal service. Though their tempers were dissimilar, yet their loyalty was equally ardent; and their opinions generally coincided. Colepepper, a man of a rough and violent temper, was accustomed to triumph over the opposition of the king, from whom he often dissented, by that decisive and resolute tone which Charles could never resist. † Falkland, though the most kind-hearted, as well as the most loyal and honourable of men, could not bring himself, with a compliance which might seem connected with flattery, to assent to some of the king's most favourite notions, especial-

* Life, p. 140—141. † Life, p. 95.

ly in regard to the church and his contradiction in these points alienated from him the affections of a sovereign for whom he had devoted his life to foreseen destruction. * Hyde was more acceptable to the king than either of his colleagues; for, on many important points, his sentiments much more nearly coincided with those of the monarch. No extremity ought, in his opinion, to induce his majesty to sanction any change in the church establishment: this tenet was sacredly maintained by Charles; while both Falkland and Colepepper considered the form of ecclesiastical government as a matter of comparatively little importance, and at any time to be sacrificed to the interests of the sovereign and the nation. Hyde was, like Falkland, the advocate of peace; but even peace, he thought, ought not to be purchased by foregoing any part of the prerogative; while Falkland was of opinion that the king ought to gratify his people by many acts of compliance, and give up a portion of his power rather than hazard the whole. †

Favour with the king.

The king, finding that the Chancellor of the Exchequer's sentiments so much corresponded with his own, began to regard them with particular confidence; and, when strongly urged to any measure, usually inquired, "whether Ned Hyde was of that opinion?" ‡ In a letter to the queen, who was at

* Life, p. 93. † Ibid. p. 92—97. ‡ Ibid. p. 99.

that time in Holland, his majesty used a still stronger expression: "I must make Ned Hyde Secretary of State," said he, "for the truth is, I can trust nobody else." This conspicuous testimony to his fidelity cost him very dear; for the letter was intercepted and published by the parliament, and he now became peculiarly obnoxious, not more to the enemies of the royal cause than to his fellow-courtiers. * These instances of favour did not, however, diminish his confidential intercourse with Falkland and Colepepper; and if he at any time differed from them, it was chiefly in regard to the affairs of the church. On one occasion, Hyde, without giving his reasons, opposed the publication of a state paper drawn up by Colepepper, and approved both by the king and Falkland; but withdrew his opposition somewhat indignantly, in consequence of a warm and sharp reproof from the latter. The king, however, became still farther attached to Hyde, when he discovered that his opposition had proceeded from his objection to a statement of Colepepper's, affirming that the King, the Lords, and the Commons, formed the three estates of the kingdom: whereas the king, in his opinion, should have been mentioned as the sovereign of the whole, and the bishops as the third estate. †

* Life, p. 139. † Ibid. p. 131.

In the fruitless attempts which were made to bring about a pacification between the king and the parliament, Hyde bore an active part. He was one of the commissioners who attended the negotiations at Uxbridge, and distinguished himself by his opposition to every concession which might have circumscribed the prerogative, or led to innovations in the government of the church. * Much, he thought, at this time, might be done by winning over from the parliament several of the most considerable men, who had indeed deeply offended, but repented of the length to which they had gone, and were desirous to avoid further excesses. But his influence was insufficient to counteract the clamour of the courtiers, and the resentment of the queen; and he had daily the mortification to see men of rank and power converted into hardened enemies of their sovereign, by having their repentant submissions treated with coldness and contempt. † Commission at Uxbridge.

During the subsequent struggles, he discovered, with unspeakable pain, that the preceding abuses of the royal authority had very generally alienated the people from their allegiance: that they obeyed the ordinances of the parliament, while they disregarded the proclamations of the king: that contributions, large beyond precedent, were readi- Situation during the war.

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 443. † Ibid. p. 254, 310.

ly paid to that assembly, while the court was distracted by extreme poverty; and that the troops of the king were actually reduced to famine, in the same counties where the army of his hostile subjects immediately after found abundant supplies. * He saw a cloud of melancholy presage overhang the countenances of the most virtuous royalists; and heard, from some, distressing doubts of the justice of the cause in which they were engaged. Sir Edward Varney, a gentleman of unshaken loyalty and distinguished courage, one day complimented him on the cheerfulness and vivacity which he retained amidst the general depression. Hyde began to point out the propriety of every one's maintaining the appearance of hope, where despondency was likely to prove so fatal; and hinted that to raise the drooping spirits of others was a duty peculiarly incumbent on men of known magnanimity like Varney. The latter replied, with a smile, that he should do his best to fulfil this task: "but my condition," said he, "is much worse than yours, and may well justify the melancholy which, I confess to you, possesses me. You are satisfied in your conscience that you are in the right; that the king ought not to grant what is required of him; and so you do your duty and your business together. But, for my part, I like not

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 265.

the quarrel; and do heartily wish that the king would yield and consent to all that is desired. It is only in honour and in gratitude that I am concerned to follow my master. I have eaten his bread, and served him near thirty years, and will not do so base a thing as to forsake him, but rather choose to lose my life, which I am sure I shall do, to defend and preserve those things which it is against my conscience to defend and preserve. For I will deal freely with you: I have no reverence for the bishops, for whom this quarrel subsists." Hyde, though unembarrassed by such doubts, was deeply affected with this conscientious avowal; and still more when he learnt, about two months afterwards, that this faithful and gallant soldier had fallen in the cause of his sovereign. *

As the Chancellor of the Exchequer took no active part in the military operations to which the fate of all parties was now committed, his counsels attracted little notice amidst the noise of war, and the violence of contending factions. He was reduced to the painful task of witnessing disorders which he could not remedy, and calamities which he could not avert. He saw the king, in his deepest distress, cruelly harassed by the importunities of his rapacious and unfeeling courtiers, who did not blush to seize on the day of his calamity to ex-

* Life, p. 134.

tort from him honours which they had not earned, and offices which they could only occupy to his ruin. * He saw a faction of women acquiring an ascendancy in the management of affairs, confounding the wisest counsels by their visionary schemes,

* There is scarcely any circumstance, in perusing the records of that period, which more powerfully excites our indignation, than the unprincipled selfishness which pervaded the immediate servants and dependents of the king. Hyde and Falkland were almost the only attendants on the court, who, in no instance, betrayed a tincture of this abject spirit. Even Sir John Colepepper, after his promotion to the Mastership of the Rolls, endeavoured also to retain the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, and took it very heavily that he was not allowed to engross the emoluments of both offices. (Life, p. 143.) The rapacity of the courtiers of those times, a vice at present comparatively so rare and infamous, may be traced to the peculiar customs of that period. As the revenue of the nation came directly into the hands of the king, and was entirely at his disposal, he might, at his pleasure, either employ it on public purposes, or lavish it on his favourite courtiers; and the latter was frequently its destination. Hence it was a usual practice with men of considerable private fortunes to waste them in adding to the magnificence of the court, and in attracting the notice of the king; in the expectation that the zeal manifested by their profusion would earn far greater riches from his bounty. A great proportion of the courtiers of Charles were persons of this description; and as their habits of dissipation rendered their wants extremely pressing, at a period when the court was in the utmost poverty, their clamorous demands were frequently among the most intolerable embarrassments of the monarch. It was owing to this mode of obtaining favours at court, that menial offices about the person of the monarch were at that period so eagerly sought after; they afforded opportunities of urging requests at a propitious moment. See Hyde's account of Colepepper in the Appendix to this volume, p. viii.

and paralysing the most vigorous plans by their fears. He saw the military officers, on whose good conduct the king now depended for his throne and his life, wasting the season of action in dissipation; incurring irretrievable disasters from a pitiful spirit of faction; insisting on the rejection of all terms of accommodation, from the hope of plundering the rebels; rendering the royal name odious by countenancing the soldiery in depredations on the inhabitants; and finally, on the ruin of their cause, forsaking their standards, and seeking for safety in foreign countries, or, in some cases, in desertion to the enemies of their king. *

But before the affairs of the sovereign were overtaken by this final ruin, Hyde was deprived of his most beloved friend, and the country of its most virtuous royalist, in the premature fall of Lord Falkland. From the commencement of the civil war, and the mutual slaughter of his countrymen, the enlivening gaiety, the unbounded affability, the winning mildness of Falkland, † were converted into a fixed melancholy, an ungracious reserve, a repulsive asperity. He became pale and dejected: his looks and words expressed unconquerable chagrin; and his dress, to which he had formerly been particularly attentive, was now remarkable only for its negligence. One topic alone could rouse him from

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. *passim.* † Life, p. 45.

his despondency: when any proposition towards peace was brought forward, his countenance brightened, and he zealously pursued the cheering prospect, while any hope could be cherished. As he sat among his friends, he would often, after a deep silence and frequent sighs, reiterate in a piercing accent the word *peace! peace!* He would then declare, that "the very agony of the war, and the view of the calamities and desolation which the kingdom endured, deprived him of his sleep, and would shortly break his heart." These expressions were interpreted into cowardice and disloyalty by the unprincipled soldiers of fortune, who looked forward with eager eyes to the plunder of their opponents; and Falkland accounted himself bound in honour to refute their calumnies, by being prodigal of a life which the good of his country required him to hold dear. In every action, he stationed himself, as a volunteer, in the foremost ranks, and acted his part with invincible courage: but no sooner did the enemy give way, than he employed his whole efforts to stop the carnage, and seemed to have come into the field merely to save the effusion of blood. In the battle of Edgehill, he incurred imminent danger by these noble acts of humanity. But he was relieved from witnessing the protracted miseries of his country. At the first battle of Newbury, which took place early in the war, he seemed to feel a presage that the

termination of his sorrows was at hand. He adjusted his dress with more care than he had for some time observed, declaring that he did not wish the enemy to find his body in a slovenly condition. "I am weary of the times," added he, "and foresee much misery to my country; but believe that I shall be out of it ere night." As he bore his part in the first onset, he was mortally wounded; and expired, in the thirty-third year of his age, leaving behind him one of the fairest reputations which history can boast.*

After the battle of Naseby, when the affairs of the king began to appear irretrievable even to the most sanguine, Charles resolved to place his eldest son beyond the reach of the parliament, by sending him out of the kingdom. He selected the Lords Capel and Hopton, as the servants in whom he could most confide, and joining with them Hyde and Colepepper, he appointed them to attend the prince as a permanent council, to watch over his safety, and direct all his proceedings. † The charge was delicate, and was soon found to be attended with a number of difficulties. The queen had by this time withdrawn to France, and was particularly desirous that the prince also should repair thither, and be placed under her direction. Such

Of the Prince of Wales's Council. 1644.

* Whitlocke, p. 73, 74. Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 270, 277. See his character by Hyde in the Appendix, p. ix.

† Life, p. 90.

was her influence over her husband, that, in his first orders to the prince's council, he had commanded them to carry him to France, and place him under his mother's care, without leaving them any discretionary power. * But the council knew that no step could be more prejudicial to the interests either of the king or the prince: that the queen was odious in England, even to the most loyal subjects, from a suspicion that she had instilled into her children the principles of popery: and that indignation would be excited among the best friends of the king, were the prince to be delivered into her hands. There was also reason to distrust the friendly intentions of the French court. Cardinal Mazarine, who now directed its councils, had prevented any effectual assistance from being rendered to Charles, and was supposed to maintain a confidential intercourse with the leaders of the parliament. It was therefore not impossible that he might not, from the views of a crooked policy, become subservient to their designs, and dispose of the prince according to their instructions. But the queen was too intent on the plan of acquiring an uncontrollable ascendancy over the mind of the prince, to be moved by these considerations. And although the council at length procured a discretionary power to convey their charge to Den-

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 527.

mark, or to any other foreign country,* they found this permission unavailing against her zealous intrigues.

From Scilly, whither they had at first fled from the arms of the parliament, they carried the prince to Jersey, an island distinguished for its loyalty, and well provided with the means of defence. Here he might, in security, and without particular offence to any party, have awaited the course of events in England: but he was immediately assailed by the commands of his mother, to repair without delay to her at Paris. At first the authority of the council, who decidedly opposed his departure, induced him to resist these applications: but at length the love of new scenes triumphed in the breast of a youth, who had only passed his fifteenth year; and he quitted Jersey, attended by only one of his council, Lord Colepepper, who had been won over to the views of the queen.† April 1645. July 1646.

Hyde remained in Jersey, and now began, in a tranquil retreat, to solace himself for the dangers and troubles through which he had passed. In the cheerful society of the governor, Sir George Carteret, and his lady, who received him, with cordial hospitality, into their family, he again enjoyed the pleasures of home: and so happily could his mind dispel uneasy recollections, that, though placed at a Employed on his History.

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 546, 547. † Ibid. Vol. III. p. 21.

distance from his wife, his children, and his dearest friends, he assures us he ever afterwards recalled, with delight, that interval of peaceful tranquillity. In the castle, he built a suite of apartments for his own use; and placed over the door an inscription which indicated, that he accounted his part sufficiently discharged in those turbulent times, if he could escape into guiltless obscurity. * Here he pursued the design which he had conceived, of recording to posterity the events of the civil wars: and he speaks, with a pardonable complacence, of the unremitting diligence with which, in the space of two years and some months spent in this retreat, he compiled his voluminous records. †

While his pen was employed in labouring for posterity, he found an opportunity of writing a seasonable reply to a declaration of the parliament. The king, after having in vain tried the loyalty of the Scots and the army, had attempted to escape from his dominions; but, by the misconduct of those who attended him, was taken prisoner, and confined in the Isle of Wight. Having rejected the propositions which the parliament now sent him, as altogether extravagant, they retaliated by a vote that no more addresses should be made to him. This

* The inscription was, *Bene vixit, qui bene latuit.* He hath lived well, who hath lain well concealed.

† Life, p. 202.

vote they accompanied by a declaration, in which they charged him with having caused all the calamities under which the kingdom suffered, and with having rejected every overture for accommodation. For these reasons, they held themselves justified in discontinuing any further addresses to him, and in proceeding, by their own authority, to provide for the welfare of the kingdom. * To this declaration the Chancellor of the Exchequer published a reply, vigorously retorting the charges of the parliament, and demonstrating the illegality of their present proceedings. The king was much pleased with this vindication; and in particular expressed surprise at the author's profound skill in theological questions. †

Joins the Prince at the Hague. April 1648.

From his peaceful retreat in Jersey, Hyde was at length summoned to attend the Prince of Wales, who had now found an opportunity for action. The fleet which had greatly injured the royal cause by an early submission to the parliament, now resolved to atone for their error, by again transferring their services to the king. With this intention, a large squadron sailed for the ports of the United Provinces; and, after taking on board the prince, who had repaired thither to join them, had returned to blockade the Thames. Here,

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 71. † Life, p. 204.

amidst the distraction of uncertain counsels, several valuable merchant vessels were successively captured, and released, or ransomed far below their value. * Though the king was then confined in the Isle of Wight, and might, by a vigorous attempt of the fleet, have been rescued, the precious interval was wasted in a blockade of the river, and the parliament was allowed to prepare a naval force. The fruitless enterprise was at length terminated by the hasty retreat of the prince, before a superior force, to the ports of Holland. †

It was on the return from this abortive expedition that the Chancellor of the Exchequer met the Prince of Wales at the Hague; and found himself engaged in a scene of confusion and animosity, which made him look back with fond regret to the tranquil retirement he had been compelled to abandon. The misfortunes of the royalists, instead of softening, had exasperated their minds; and a community in misery seemed to give a new edge to their mutual resentments. Reduced from a licentious prodigality to galling poverty, they grasped, without honour or decency,

* These vessels belonged to the merchants of London, and were restored on easy terms, with a view to conciliate the citizens; a policy which proved ineffectual, and is much condemned by Clarendon, who thinks that none but severe remedies ought to have been applied to their distempered minds.

† Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 121, 124.

at the scanty resources which the cold generosity of foreign princes bestowed on their master: and we are tempted by turns to ridicule and to lament the furious contests for power and pre-eminence, which agitated this handful of exiled courtiers. To such a degree had private passions absorbed every other consideration in the breasts of these unfortunate men, that some of them had even laboured to excite a mutiny in the fleet with a view to oppress their rivals; and overlooked the danger of shaking the allegiance of the sailors in their ardour to prevent their being led by their antagonists. *

As the Chancellor had borne no part in these intrigues, his arrival was welcomed by all parties; and he was soon beset by the contending courtiers, who endeavoured to draw him to their faction, by bitter invectives against their opponents. † He beheld, with extreme concern, these dissentions, so indecent amidst public calamities, and so ruinous to the royal cause: he exerted all his powers of conciliation to allay them: yet could he scarcely prevent Prince Rupert and Lord Colepepper from terminating, by a personal fray, the insults which they offered to each other in the presence of the Prince of Wales and the Council. ‡ The news of Jan. 30, 1649.

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 107. † Ib. p. 128. ‡ Ib. p. 149.

the king's death for a time diffused universal melancholy and consternation; yet, in a few weeks, the animosities of the courtiers reassumed their former virulence, and distracted the councils of their new sovereign. "I find," exclaims Hyde on this occasion, "that no desolation upon the public, no lowness of the court, will lessen our particular ambitions, or private designs." *

Hated by the queen.

Amidst a society so misled by private passions, a man of moderation and disinterested zeal, like Hyde, could not long prove acceptable; and he soon found himself aspersed by the calumnies of those who were unable to render him subservient to their factious purposes. Above all, he was pursued with animosity by the adherents of the queen, who was his avowed foe. That ambitious princess had learned to regard as her private enemy every minister who pretended to any independent favour with her husband; and Hyde, who had acquired the confidence of his sovereign, by means more honourable than enlisting himself among her creatures, had become, in her eyes, not less odious than Laud or Strafford. From his attachment to the church of England and to moderate measures, his counsels had often differed from those of her majesty; and she had hence been led to charge to his account

* Letter to Lord Jermyn, in Clarendon's State Papers, Vol. II. p. 473.

every resolution which corresponded not with her desires. When he was appointed of the prince's council, she began to dread that he would undermine her ascendancy over her son, as she imagined he had her influence with her husband; and his strenuous opposition to the departure of the prince from Jersey to France confirmed all these impressions. Her ambition, however, was not guided by discretion; and the means which she employed to secure her sway over her son effectually counteracted her intentions. Instead of settling on him separate appointments, the court of France had merely increased the allowance of his mother; and, having him thus wholly in her power, she took care to make him feel his absolute dependence, by dealing her bounty with so sparing a hand, that he had never, at one time, ten pistoles at his disposal.* Yet was she surprised to find that his affections daily became more estranged from her; and when Hyde afterwards joined him at the Hague, she failed not to ascribe to his intrigues an alienation which naturally flowed from her own illiberality. So eager was she to govern the mind of the prince, that, in her first letters to him after her husband's death, she could not, though overcome with the melancholy intelligence, forbear in-

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 88.

troducing an injunction that he should swear in no members of his council till he had first consulted her. * And when she found this injunction disregarded, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer among the first of the new sovereign's counsellors, she here discovered fresh proofs of his hostility to her influence.

Ambassador to Spain.

From the inheritance of a throne, Charles had not even derived a roof to shelter his head: and the first councils of the new monarch were occupied in deliberating what quarter of Europe might best afford him subsistence and refuge. His removal from Holland became indispensable, in consequence of the increasing connections of that country with the revolutionary government of England. Some prospect was opened for active enterprise in Ireland; but the assistance of France was necessary for its successful prosecution, and the prince was to repair to Paris before proceeding on the attempt. In this state of things, Hyde looked forward to his future attendance with uneasiness. His constitution, enfeebled by former hardships, and by premature paroxysms of the gout, was ill prepared to sustain the vicissitudes of hasty journeys and uncertain voyages: his habits were altogether unsuited to the active enterprises of war:

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 216.

and to remain in France, exposed to the hatred of the queen, and the insults of her dependents, was the most gloomy of alternatives. He, therefore, willingly hearkened to the suggestions of his friend and colleague, Lord Cottington, that they should procure for themselves a mission into Spain, for the purpose of soliciting the assistance of that monarchy. Their request was readily complied with by Charles; but their motives were severely scrutinized by the other courtiers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was reproached with being more concerned for his ease than the discharge of his duty; with deserting his prince, at the season of greatest danger; and with abandoning his youth and indiscretion to the guidance of the selfish and the vicious.* But Hyde was weary of the society into which he had fallen; and equally dispirited by the state of the royal cause, and the perpetual contentions of the needy men by whom he was surrounded. † "He did believe," as he informs us, "that he should in some degree improve his understanding, and very much refresh his spirits, by what he should learn, and by his absence from being continually conversant with those wants, which could never be severed from that court, and

* Life, p. 218.

† Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 235.

that company which would be always corrupted by those wants." *

Reception there. 1649. The reception which the ambassadors found in Spain was such as the servants of exiled princes usually experience. Their business, solicitation for supplies, was unwelcome to an embarrassed government: and, if they could present no cogent motives of hope or fear, they had little reason to expect that interest would be sacrificed to a romantic generosity. On arriving, as the fortunes of their master were accounted desperate, and the favour of the parliament eagerly courted by the rival governments of France and Spain, they were allowed to enter Madrid, unacknowledged and unnoticed. No house was prepared for their reception as ambassadors, nor any outward tokens of respect vouchsafed them. When at length their importunities and a regard to decency procured them an audience, they were amused with general professions of friendship, the sincerity of which they were left to estimate from the coldness and neglect which they daily experienced. The appearance of Prince Rupert on the coasts of Spain, with the royal fleet, produced a sudden and wonderful change: the ambassadors were received at court with open arms, all their requests answered with

* Life, p. 219.

magnificent promises, and their doors honoured by the most illustrious visitors. * So long as Prince Rupert was an object of terror, the Spaniards seemed entirely at their devotion; but the arrival of a superior fleet, in the service of the parliament, quickly altered the face of affairs, and the ambassadors again found themselves consigned to neglect. † The accounts that the Scots had declared for Charles, and placed him at the head of a powerful army, renewed the smiles of the Spanish courtiers: but when reports arrived that the prince had been irretrievably defeated, the ambassadors received very distinct intimations that their absence would be agreeable. ‡

Unwilling to abandon the hope of succour, and uncertain whither to go, the ambassadors resolved not to understand these ungracious hints: but no room was left for a dubious interpretation, when the Secretary of State, one morning, repairing unexpectedly to their residence, delivered them an express command from the king, that they should quit the Spanish dominions without delay. If they were moved at this extraordinary rudeness, and the hardship imposed on them at so inclement a season of the year, (it was then towards the end 1651.

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 262. † Ibid. p. 263.
‡ Ibid. p. 295.

of January;) their indignation was not lessened on discovering the immediate cause of this royal message. A large assortment of valuable pictures and rich furniture, which the Spanish envoy at London had purchased at the sale of the king's property, had just arrived in port; and it appeared indecorous to convey them to the palace, before the eyes of the English ambassadors. * Lord Cottington, who had now attained his seventy-sixth year, was weary of wanderings to which he saw no end; and having formerly lived much in Spain, and embraced the Catholic religion, he returned to the bosom of that church, and obtained permission to pass the remainder of his days in private at Valladolid: † Hyde was dismissed with tolerable civility; but could carry with him no impressions favourable to the generosity of the Spaniards, who had not only neglected him in his public capacity, but had seen him reduced to an indigence almost incredible. ‡

Condemns the treaty with the Scots.

On quitting Spain, it was some time before

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 295.

† Ibid. p. 297. See Appendix, p. xi. for Hyde's account of Lord Cottington.

‡ At one period of his embassy, he writes to a friend: "I never felt the like want I have done these three weeks, since I was born; and if I had a pistole to dispose of in that time I am no honest man." State Papers, Vol. III. p. 21.

Hyde could discover the retreat of his fugitive prince, who, after witnessing the ruin of all his hopes at the battle of Worcester, had disappeared from his affrighted adherents.* After wandering, unattended and disguised, through various parts of England, he at length escaped to the Continent, and reaped no other fruit from his dangers and hardships, but an aggravation of his misfortunes. This rash enterprise served only to confirm the power and reputation of Cromwell, and was severely censured by Hyde. He placed little reliance on either the fidelity or the strength of the Scots; but the taking of the covenant by Charles, the price of the Scottish assistance, he looked on as an act so profligate and impious, that no consequences could be expected from it but defeat and disgrace. He knew that the young king neither intended to perform what he promised, nor believed that to

* The Scots, perceiving that Cromwell and the independents were no less enemies to their covenant than the court had been, resolved to espouse the royal cause, and invited Charles to put himself at the head of their forces. They, however, took the precaution of entering into certain stipulations with him, both for religious and civil privileges; and, in particular, they required him to take the covenant, a step to which he was also urged by the queen, who thought such arts very allowable for the recovery of a throne. But the Scots were unequal antagonists to Cromwell. After experiencing one defeat, they indeed levied another army, with which Charles, leaving the enemy behind him, suddenly marched into England; but was overtaken at Worcester by Cromwell, and totally routed.

which he solemnly swore; and he was of opinion that no worldly consideration could justify such a flagrant violation of conscience. "It is now to no purpose," writes he on this occasion, "to talk more of that sad argument, which can be justified by no human reason, let the success be what it will; we must only rely on God Almighty, who will in the end bring light out of this darkness; and, I am confident, they who shall, in spite of all evil examples, continue honest and steady to their good principles, what distresses soever they may for a time suffer, will in the end find happiness even in this world; and that all your dexterous compliers will be exposed to the infamy they deserve." *

Harassed by calumnies.

In expectation, therefore, of brighter days, he resolved to follow the fortune of his sovereign, however discouraging, and to retain his integrity as the unfailing anchor of his hopes. At Paris, where he now joined the king, he undertook, in the absence of his friend Sir Edward Nicholas, †

* Hyde to Secretary Nicholas, State Papers, Vol. III. p. 22.

† Sir Edward Nicholas had been secretary of state during the whole of the civil commotions, and had discharged his duty with disinterested fidelity. He was the bosom friend of Hyde, and rendered him some essential services, by affording pecuniary relief to his family during their exile. Nicholas was now in Holland, watching the course of events, and availing himself of any occasion to promote the interests of his master. The correspondence which, at this

to act as principal secretary of state; and soon found himself involved in the cabals and dissentions from which he had gladly escaped. The followers of the king were divided between the favourers of the Presbyterian and of the Popish factions; and Hyde, who resolutely maintained his attachment to the Church of England, was equally disliked by both. * The queen, who had now lost all influence over the mind of her son, was exasperated to see that confidence, to which she in vain aspired, cordially reposed in the chancellor of the exchequer: and to such an extremity did she and her partisans carry their animosity, that they were willing to do any mischief to the cause, provided they could render the services of his minister unsuccessful. † The most bitter calumnies were circulated against the chancellor: he was even stigmatised as a traitor; and a report was confidently divulged, that he had been in England, and entered into an intrigue with Cromwell. ‡ These incessant efforts of malice preyed on his quiet; and, in his letters to his confidential friend, Secretary Nicholas, we often find him lamenting this cruel aggravation of his misfortunes. "The vex-

period, passed between him and Hyde, has fortunately been preserved; and it is from hence we derive the most interesting particulars concerning the exiles.

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 138.

† Ibid. p. 164.

‡ Ibid. p. 206.

ations I undergo, by what I see and hear daily, and the insupportable weight of envy and malice I groan under, when I behave myself, (God knows,) with as much care as if I were to die the next minute, does make my life so unpleasant to me, and breaks my mind, that bread and water in any corner of the world would give me all the joy imaginable." * "Oh!" he exclaims, "to be quiet and starve is no unpleasant condition to what I endure." † He often looked back, with an eye of regret, to his tranquil retreat in Jersey, and envied the lot of those who might quietly enjoy their studies and poverty. "I wish," says he, "that I were at my books in any part of the world; for I am not made for these conflicts." ‡ He was often tormented with the gout, and worn out by the pressure of business. Occasionally he expresses to his friend an apprehension that he should sink under his difficulties: "yet," he adds, "I am persuaded if I might be quiet and left to my books, I should outlive this storm; whereas this condition I am in breaks my mind and wastes my spirits so much, that I cannot hold out long." §

Favoured by Charles.

The animosity of the queen towards him became so avowed, that he found it necessary at length to avoid her presence; and though they

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 169. † Ibid. p. 63.
‡ Ibid. p. 211. § Ibid. p. 216.

both lodged in the same palace at Paris, he did not once see her in the course of many months. Two formal petitions were prepared, the one in the name of all the presbyterian loyalists, the other as the desire of all his majesty's popish subjects, praying that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be removed from his councils and his presence, as a person whom all his friends regarded as their enemy. * Such intrigues, however, made no impression on Charles, who saw through their malice; and continued to place unlimited confidence in Hyde. That prince had considerable penetration, and easily distinguished the disinterested zeal of the Chancellor, from the selfish motives of others. Besides, even in this his day of penury, Charles was immoderately addicted to pleasure: and neither the pressure of difficulties, nor the hopes of recovering a crown, could induce him to bestow a reasonable attention on his affairs. While his minister was so continually engaged in carrying on the correspondence with the loyalists in every part of Europe, that he had scarcely leisure for the necessary refreshment of his body, Charles could prevail on himself to write letters only on Friday; and, when that day happened to be occupied by some other engagement, which was often the case, the most essential dispatches were defer-

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 398.

red for another week.* From these dissolute habits, his ministers began to apprehend the worst consequences; † and the faithful Marquis of Ormond, who had succeeded Falkland in the friendship and esteem of Hyde, lamented that his dissipation contributed more to the ruin of his cause, than all the strength of his enemies. "I fear," writes the Marquis, "his immoderate delight in empty and vulgar conversations is become an irresistible part of his nature, and will never suffer him to animate his own designs, or the actions of others, with that spirit which is requisite to his quality, and much more to his fortune." ‡ To a prince so engrossed by the love of pleasure, no treasure could be more valuable than a minister on whose fidelity he could implicitly rely, and whose industry would repair the evils of his own neglect. No arts, therefore, could induce Charles to withdraw his countenance from Hyde. He even heard his remonstrances without displeasure; and was willing to be admonished, provided he was relieved from labour.

Extreme poverty.

As the period of exile was protracted, the necessities of Charles and his followers increased: they received little alleviation from his brother monarchs, who seem never to have been led, by so striking

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 159.

† Hyde to Nicholas, ibid. p. 173.

‡ Ormond to Hyde, State Papers, Vol. III. p. 387.

an example, to reflect on the strange vicissitudes of human affairs. By dint of importunity, his agents had drawn from the princes of Germany some promises of pecuniary contributions; but of these, the few which were paid could seldom be recovered from the grasp of the agents employed to receive them. The royal family of France, though so nearly connected with the exiled prince by the ties of kindred, contributed very little to his relief. At one time, Charles flattered himself with deriving a more independent relief from the exertions of his fleet, which had made several rich prizes from the West India trade of England: but when he came to inquire after his share of the booty, he had the mortification to receive from his cousin Prince Rupert, the admiral, a statement of expence, which made Charles appear much in debt by the operations from which he expected supplies. *

Hyde sustained his full share of the general indigence; for he could neither intercept the scanty

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 224. Hyde apprehended that there was something worse than want of generosity in the conduct of Prince Rupert on this occasion. "The Prince Rupert," says he, "hath, in a little short paper, not containing twenty lines, given the king an account, by which he makes the king in debt to him, so senselessly and ridiculously as cannot be imagined; and this is a secret, for he desires it may not be seen, nor does he imagine that I have seen it."

supplies of his necessitous master, nor submit to any device inconsistent with his character. In his dispatches to his friend Sir Edward Nicholas, we find him frequently complaining of his urgent wants. "I am so cold," says he, "that I am scarce able to hold my pen, and have not three sous in the world to buy a faggot." * Again, "It is now mid-winter, and I have neither clothes nor fire to preserve me from the severity of the season." † He had been obliged to incur such debts for the mere necessaries of life, that he began to look with apprehension to the gloom of a prison; ‡ and he could no longer procure a dress sufficient either for comfort or appearance. "I want shoes and shirts," says he, "and the Marquis of Ormond is in no better condition." § Those men, who had so lately lived in affluence and splendour, were now taught to devise the most frugal expedients for subsistence. They procured a maintenance at the most moderate rate, by messing together at an obscure eating-house; and, after their pockets were fairly emptied even by this economical arrangement, they had sufficient credit with their landlady to live for some time on trust. At this period, Hyde assures us he scarcely knew one of the king's servants who had a single pistole

* Hyde to Nicholas, State Papers, Vol. III. p. 126.
† Ibid. p. 112. ‡ Ibid. p. 164. § Ibid. p. 229.

in his pocket. "I have not," he says, "been master of a crown these many months; I am cold for want of clothes and fire, and owe for all the meat which I have eaten these three months, and to a poor woman who is no longer able to trust; and my poor family at Antwerp (which breaks my heart) is in as sad a state as I am; and the king as either of us." *

Persevering integrity.

Notwithstanding this severe pressure, Hyde still maintained the same erect aspect; and turned with disdain from every proposal which might have compromised his integrity. Some of the king's followers embraced the Catholic religion, and entered into the service of France and Spain: a still greater proportion returned to England, and, by certain compliances with the existing government, were allowed to regain their estates on paying a composition. Both these courses were strenuously reprobated by Hyde; and when urged to allow at least some friend to compound for his estates in his behalf, he declared that no necessity should induce him to acknowledge a government which, in his

* Hyde to Nicholas, State Papers, Vol. III. p. 124. The wretchedness to which some of the king's faithful followers were reduced almost exceeds belief. Hyde thus writes to Nicholas: "Poor Dick Harding is again fallen into a new pit. Upon my credit, he hath pawned every little thing he hath; the cup which the prince gave him, and every spoon, and hath not a shirt to his back." Ib. p. 352.

heart, he considered a usurpation. Through all these difficulties, his courage was supported by the fortitude of his wife, who sustained the sad reverse of her fortune with singular magnanimity. She remained in England until it was no longer safe: she then retired with her family to Antwerp, and there endeavoured, by the arts of frugality, to avoid the sordid aspect of penury. Hyde acknowledges that, on this side alone, he trembled for his constancy; and that, if his wife had been unequal to her distresses, the conflict would have been severe between his honour and his softer feelings. He dwells on the "unspeakable comfort which he derived from her miraculous courage;" and declares that it was his chief consolation amidst all his difficulties. *

While his own misfortunes were at the height, he continually strove to animate the resolution of others: the exhortations which he employed gave an exalted idea of his virtue and piety. "Keep up your spirits," writes he to Secretary Nicholas, "and take heed of sinking under a burden, which you never kneeled to take up. Our innocence begets our cheerfulness, and that again will be a means to secure the other. Whoever grows too weary and impatient of the condition he is in, will too impatiently project to get out of it; and that,

* State Papers, Vol. II. p. 310.

by degrees, will shake, or baffle, or delude his innocence. We have no reason to blush for the poverty which is not brought on us by our own faults. As long as it pleases God to give me health, (which, I thank him, I have in a good measure,) I shall think he intends that I shall outlive all these sufferings; and when he sends sickness, I shall (I hope with the same submission) believe that he intends to remove me from greater calamities." *

After residing for some time at Paris in extreme indigence, Charles at length found that he could not expect even an asylum from the French court. It was then governed by a calculating Italian, and seemed actuated by very selfish motives. Even before Charles quitted Jersey, his council was apprized that this ungenerous court had planned, in concurrence with the partisans of the queen, to render him tributary to France, as the price of its aid in his restoration; and, in particular, to sever from England the islands of Jersey and Guernsey.† The increasing power of the revolutionary government rendered these designs abortive; yet, during the whole course of his exile, Charles received no better indications of friendship or honour. "The cheats," says Hyde, "and the villany of that na-

* State Papers, Vol. II. p. 310. † Ibid. p. 276, 279.

tion, are so gross, that I cannot think of it with patience; nor will the king ever prosper till he abhors them perfectly, and trusts none who trusts them." * The full establishment of Cromwell's power put an end to all disguises: and Mazarine, partly in prosecution of his design to humble the Spaniards, partly from a dread of the Protector's power, gladly embraced a strict alliance with England. From complaisance to his new ally, he hastened to withdraw his protection from the exiles; and Charles, with his few adherents, was
1654. again compelled to wander in quest of an abode. †

The wars in which the Dutch, and afterwards the Spaniards, engaged with Cromwell, seemed to offer some prospect of relief to the royal cause. But the vigour of the Protector was not to be shaken: and neither of these powers showed an inclination to embarrass their negotiations by conditions for the exiled prince. The enterprises of

* State Papers, Vol. II. p. 242.

† The equipage in which Charles set out from Paris, on this occasion, gives a striking idea of the penury to which he was reduced. His coach-horses, which still remained to him, he put to a waggon containing his bed and clothes. He himself performed the journey on horseback; nor was he owner of a coach for some years afterwards. From this time he resided chiefly at Cologne, Brussels, and other towns in the Low Countries. At all of them he was obliged to contract debts, and to endure the continual importunities of his creditors. He was often forced to put off the most necessary journeys, from the want of money to bear his travelling expences. See Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 411, &c.

foreign armies, or domestic conspirators, seemed equally hopeless during the sway of this energetic usurper; and the termination of his life began to be regarded by the royalists as so essential to their cause, that no means appeared nefarious which could effect that object. It is not to be concealed that even Hyde encouraged the attempts of Captain Titus and others to remove Cromwell by assassination.* To such a degree do men reconcile themselves to the worst means, when they are eagerly bent on the end, that even this conscientious minister, in his devotion to the rights of the king, forgot what was due to the rights of human nature.

The rapid decay of a constitution exhausted by incessant fatigue and agitation, unexpectedly accomplished what the hand of the assassin had attempted in vain; and the death of Cromwell again awakened all the hopes of the royalists. The event, however, was not immediately followed by favourable occurrences. The power and title of the Protector passed into the hands of his son with the same facility as if the inheritance had been a legitimate transmission. The court of France testified its sorrow for the loss of its ally, by appearing in mourning; † and no state which courted the fa-

1658. Death of Cromwell.

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 321, 331, 357, 584. See in Appendix, p. xii. the character of Cromwell by Hyde.

† Ibid. p. 418.

vour, or dreaded the resentment of England, delayed to congratulate the new Protector on his accession. But the aspect of affairs soon underwent
1659. a change. The sceptre was easily wrested from the feeble hands of Richard Cromwell by ambitious chiefs; and the government was again involved in revolutions of which no one could discover the termination.

Even in his most desperate fortunes, Hyde looked with aversion on the project of reducing his rebellious countrymen by foreign arms: * and he never failed to cherish a hope that Providence, by some unforeseen and extraordinary means, would finally give a triumph to the righteous cause. † That happy event appeared at length to be approaching when men began to look on the restoration of the ancient government as the only means of avoiding bloodshed and anarchy.

State of England. Nothing could exceed the confusion of political ideas which then prevailed in England. The leaders of the people had comprehended the tendency of the measures of Charles the First, and perceived that unless the privileges of parliament were strictly guarded, the liberties of the nation were at end. But when they proceeded to renounce monarchy entirely, and to frame a new constitution, they showed themselves utterly unacquainted with

* State Papers, Vol. II. p. 307, 329. † Ibid. p. 529.

the essential principles of government; and discovered no better security for the freedom of the people, than to substitute the tyranny of many for the tyranny of one. The parliament, which had now usurped all power, quickly found itself at the mercy of the army, and the misguided struggles for liberty terminated in the most lawless of all dominions, a military despotism. When the death of Cromwell, and the deposition of his son, enabled the active spirits to resume the business of framing constitutions, they showed that their political sagacity had received little improvement. They had very little idea of that distribution of power, by which the authority of rulers is rendered at once effectual and innoxious; their crude discussions turned on the eligibility of vesting the supreme power in one man, in a few, or in the people at large; and men seemed ready to lose their lives for the theoretical governments, which were either pernicious or impracticable.

The distraction of political opinions was increased by their association with religious chimeras. At the commencement of the civil commotions, the controversies between the churchmen and the puritan dissenters were of little importance: they were confined chiefly to the ceremonial of worship; for the Arminian doctrines, though countenanced by the bishops, had by no means been adopted into the creed of the church. When the civil disputes

grew high, the decided part which the prelates took in support of the court rendered them odious to the advocates of freedom; and gave popularity to a presbyterian form of church-government, where all the ministers of religion should he placed on a footing of equality. But the presbyterian leaders showed themselves no less attached to particular institutions than the followers of episcopacy. All the change which they desired was the legal establishment of their own modes of worship and church-government; and Whitgift or Laud had not been more decided enemies than them to general toleration. In civil affairs, they would have been content to restore the king to his throne, but under limitations which his episcopal followers deemed incompatible with monarchy. Tenets of this nature were unacceptable to two very efficient classes in the nation; to those who desired full liberty of conscience, and to those who aimed at a total alteration of the constitution. A new sect of religionists, therefore, arose, who proclaimed their superior liberality, by assuming the name of independents. Renouncing all church establishments, all forms and human creeds, they affected to have no other teacher than the Spirit of God. They denied to no one that perfect freedom of conscience which they claimed for themselves; and the most ignorant mechanics and common soldiers, by the force of inspiration, became popular teachers of

theology. Such were the tenets embraced by the army, who first put their king to death as a tyrant, and afterwards invested their leader with the power of a despot. The political opinions of the independents were no less various and incoherent. One party, the levellers, aimed at nothing less than to equalize all men in authority. A peculiar sect, the fifth-monarchy-men, believed that the millennium was at hand; and that Chirst, with his saints, (among whom they failed not to include themselves,) was about to assume the government of empires. All these extravagancies disgusted the reflecting part of the nation, and made them long for the restoration of the ancient constitution, however rudely adjusted by time and accident.

A considerable interval, however, was passed in uncertainty. The Rump Parliament, finding the seat of government unoccupied, resumed its former station; but, on growing imperious, was again displaced by the army. A grand council of officers now held the supreme direction of affairs, but seemed uncertain how to employ their authority: the city of London acknowledged only its own magistrates; and the three armies stationed respectively in England, Scotland, and Ireland, appeared resolved to dispute the sovereignty. Yet amidst all this confusion, the affairs of private life proceeded in their usual channel. Men heard of the successive changes as if they were nowise con-

cerned; and the royalists began to apprehend that the minds of the people, reconciled by habit to this state of things, would cease to desire a more stable government. *

General Monk.

The loyalty or the selfishness of an individual first opened the way to the restoration. General Monk had distinguished himself as an officer in the king's army; and having been taken prisoner by the forces of the parliament, was confined in the Tower till the subjugation of the royalists. At length the temptation of his liberty and a superior command induced him to enter into the service of Cromwell: and so well did he prove his fidelity to the Protector, that he was received into his entire confidence, and appointed commander-in-chief of the forces in Scotland. When the remains of the Long Parliament had regained their authority, he submitted to it, with every expression of duty; and when the army in London, under the command of his rival, Lambert, dissolved that assembly, he declared loudly against this violence, and marched into England to avenge the quarrel. Lambert hastened northwards to meet him: but his army mouldered away without a blow, and he was himself compelled to surrender as a prisoner. Monk continued his march towards London; and drew on himself the eyes of all men, as the irresistible arbi-

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 585.

ter of the future government. His behaviour was calculated to cherish hopes in every party. He privately listened to the overtures of the king's agents: he received, with obliging expressions, the numerous addresses for a free parliament, * which were presented to him on his march: and, in his open declarations, he gave the most solemn assurances of fidelity to the existing parliament, and of his devoted attachment to republicanism. † He wished that his right hand might drop off, if it was not employed to resist every attempt of the king's partisans; ‡ and, in a letter to Sir Arthur Haslerig, a principal leader of the parliament, he renewed his vows in terms, which could not be distrusted, if any confidence was to be placed in protestations: "As for a commonwealth," said he, "believe me, Sir, for I speak it in the presence of God, it is the desire of my soul, and shall, the Lord assisting, be witnessed by the actions of my life, that these nations be so settled in a free state, without a king, single person, or house of peers, that

* The Rump Parliament, for whom Monk now declared, comprehended only the members of the independent party, who had, for some time, been allowed to retain their authority, after Cromwell had excluded the presbyterians and the rest of the opposition. By the demand for a *free parliament*, some intended the restoration of these excluded members to their seats, and others the election of new representatives.

† State Papers, Vol. III. p. 629, 632, 661. ‡ Ibid. p. 703.

they may be governed by their representatives in parliament successively." *

When he appeared before the parliament, his language continued to breathe a devoted attachment to them, and bitter invectives against monarchy: † and when they commanded him to march from Westminster into the city, and chastise the insolence of the refractory citizens, who harassed them with importunities for a free parliament, he promptly executed the orders, demolished their gates and other defences, committed many to the Tower, and aggravated his severity by every expression of contempt. ‡ But on the very day that he had reduced the royalists to despair, by thus enforcing the authority of the parliament, he found that this assembly was engaged in private consultations to deprive him of his power, and to associate others with him in the command of the army. On the following day, therefore, he wrote a severe letter to the House, reproaching them with their misconduct, and requiring them immediately to summon a free parliament. He then marched again into the city; summoned the mayor, aldermen, and common-council, to Guildhall; apologised for the transactions of the preceding day; assured them that he would unite his endeavours to theirs,

* Letter from Monk to Haslerig, ibid. p. 678.

† State Papers, p. 688. ‡ Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 557.

to procure a free parliament, and compose the distractions of the kingdom. * These declarations were received by the astonished citizens with transport; and as the former evening had closed in consternation and dismal forebodings, the present was prolonged by bonfires and every demonstration of joy. By the direction of Monk, the members formerly expelled from the House of Commons by Cromwell were re-admitted to their seats; and now forming a majority in that assembly, proceeded to issue writs for a new parliament, and then voted their own dissolution. The elections were carried decidedly in favour of the royalists; and Monk, who had now entered into direct negotiations with the king, was no less successful in preparing the army for his reception. The first overtures of Charles to the new representatives were received with transport, and his return demanded with enthusiasm. † Monk and the other leaders were too intent on atoning for their past offences, and in conciliating the favour of their new monarch, to embarrass him with any stipulations for the liberties of the people: and Charles ascended the throne of his father, without any restriction on those pretensions which had caused so many years of confusion and bloodshed. ‡

1660. Restoration of the king.

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 692. † Ibid. p. 736.

‡ There are few points in the English history which have been more keenly controverted than the views and character of Monk.

Hyde created Lord Chancellor.

During these transactions, Hyde, who, in the meantime, had been created Lord Chancellor, was

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The friends of royalty have been unwilling to allow that the man, who acted so meritorious a part in the restoration of the king, could be stained with any vices. It is, however, difficult to reconcile his conduct to any rules of morality. The successive transference of his allegiance from the king to Cromwell, from the son of Cromwell to the Rump Parliament, and again from the Rump Parliament to the king, can be excused by those only who look on interest as the standard of truth and honour. If, as some allege, he was, in his heart, always loyal to the king, and only waited an opportunity to serve him with effect, we free him from the charge of unprincipled versatility, by subjecting him to the imputation of gross hypocrisy. No prospect of private or public good can excuse wilful and deliberate perjury. Clarendon considered him as acting on no settled plan; but thinks that he changed his views as his interest seemed to be affected by successive occurrences. During his march to London, the Chancellor had great distrust of his intentions; and feared that the honours and emoluments showered on him by the parliament would "work very far on his ambitious and avaricious nature." (State Papers, Vol. III. p. 679.) Even in his History of the Rebellion, after he had more minutely weighed the transactions of the general, Clarendon seems to have entertained an opinion, that, if the parliament had acted with proper discretion towards Monk, "they might have found a full condescension from him, at least no opposition to all their other counsels:" and that "the disposition, which finally grew in him towards the royal cause, did arise from divers accidents, which fell out in the course of affairs, and seemed even to oblige him to undertake that which in the end conduced so much to his greatness and glory." (Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 548, 558.) It is certain that Monk could not, without extreme hazard, have then attempted to act the part of Cromwell; and that he could not gratify selfish passions so fully by establishing a free republic, or a strictly limited monarchy, as by restoring the king without any conditions.

busily employed in managing the secret correspondence with the royalists, and in directing their private negotiations with Monk and the other leaders. When the restoration of the monarchy became no longer doubtful, his great apprehension was, that conditions would be imposed on the king: and, in that event, he had reason to dread stipulations in favour of the Presbyterian discipline, to which he felt an unconquerable aversion. He, therefore, pressed "that all should be settled on the old foundation;" and the king unconditionally restored to his inheritance. * He was, indeed, personally interested in preserving the freedom of his master: for he had received information, that, if the Parliament made conditions with the king, an express stipulation would be inserted for his exclusion from the royal councils. † The arts of his opponents were, however, ineffectual: he had his full share in the triumph of his cause; and his tried fidelity, and protracted sufferings, were rewarded by the station of Lord Chancellor and principal minister of England.

If, in the days of poverty and danger, Charles had eagerly fled from business and reflection to any pleasure which occasion offered; we are not to wonder that he willingly delivered himself up to those unbounded festivities which now occupied

Principal Minister.

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 710. † Ibid. p. 728.

the court and the nation. In these festivities, the royalists seemed desirous to forget their sufferings, the republicans to bury their demerits. The Chancellor alone had habits of business and temperance too confirmed to be shaken by the surrounding contagion; and it was with general approbation that Charles gave him a complete control over public affairs. * The task of reducing to order the confusion engendered during so many years, of undergoing endless importunities for pardon, for reward, and for favour, was, indeed, scarcely an object of envy. The principal offices of state were distributed among persons whom he wholly approved: the Marquis of Ormond was created Lord Steward of the Household; Sir Edward Nicholas continued principal Secretary of State; and the Earl of Southampton, a man whom kindred virtues endeared to the Chancellor, was placed at the head of the Treasury. With these colleagues, Hyde, who was soon afterwards known as Earl of Clarendon, maintained the most unreserved and confidential intercourse; profiting, on every important occasion, by their advice, and supporting his measures by their authority.

Public measures; act of indemnity.

The first and most urgent care of government was to moderate those agitations of hope and fears which, amidst the appearance of universal joy, se-

* Continuation of Clarendon's Life, p. 43.

cretly prevailed in the bosoms of the people. Those who had been injured in their persons, and despoiled of their property, for their attachment to the royal cause, now looked for reparation and revenge; while those who had borne an active part in the revolution, and shared in its spoils, beheld, with terror, the rod of power transferred to their enemies. As the first tumults of joy subsided, the animosities of party became daily more apparent: and until some effectual remedy should be applied, it was impossible either to subdue the disorder or to rest in security from new commotions. Charles, before returning, had given solemn assurances that, with the exception of those who had actually sat in judgment on his father, no one should suffer for acts of disloyalty. In conformity to this promise, which it was equally wise to make, and politic to preserve inviolate, Clarendon prepared an act of indemnity and oblivion, which, by effacing, with a few exceptions, the transgressions of former times, should consign to final rest the jealousies of the public. In the convention parliament, which invited the return of the king, and included a large proportion of repentant revolutionists, this act was readily passed; but, in the succeeding parliament, the sanction of which was accounted requisite for the validity of all acts passed by the convention, the bill of indemnity met with strenuous opposition from the numerous royalists who were now return-

ed as representatives. The influence of Clarendon and the other ministers seemed scarcely sufficient to overpower the refractory humour of the two houses; and it was not until after the repeated and personal instances of the king, who saw that he could expect neither ease nor security if the royalists were let loose on their former enemies, that the act was at length reluctantly passed. *

The salutary effects of this measure were evinced by the evils resulting from even the few exceptions that were made. The judges of the king ascended the scaffold with the same intrepidity as their royal victim; and their last words were employed in exhorting the people not to despair of a cause for which they gloried to perish. Such scenes never fail to make a deep impression on the multitude, who are not aware how usual it is for men to encounter death with resolution, amidst a crowd of admiring spectators. The death both of the king and of the regicides, by attracting general sympathy and admiration, alternately procured many proselytes to their respective causes. A still worse effect was produced on the minds of the people by the execution of Sir Harry Vane, who, far from being one of the king's judges, had openly disapproved his condemnation; and whose death

* Continuation, p. 133. Burnet's History of his own Times, Vol. I. p. 240.

was the consequence partly of imprudent language, partly of the hatred of the royalists, for his share in the attainder of Strafford. On the approach of his fate, Vane seemed to triumph over all fears, from a confidence in the justice of his cause. To prevent the effects of his dying eloquence, which his opponents exceedingly apprehended, drummers were stationed around the scaffold; who, with their instruments, drowned his voice, as soon as he began to address the people. Vane, nowise disconcerted, desired they might be stopped while he performed his devotions; and when they renewed their noise, he laid his head on the scaffold with a silent composure, which spoke more forcibly to the hearts of the people than the most eloquent oration. *

The protecting part of the act of indemnity gave rise to the most importunate clamours among the royalists. They had formed expectations as unbounded as if the king had been restored to his throne by the force of their arms; and anticipated, in a plenteous harvest of forfeitures, an ample compensation for all their losses and sufferings. When these hopes were finally disappointed by the act of indemnity, they broke forth into bitter invectives against its principal promoter. Clarendon did not

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 238. See in Appendix, p. xiv. some observations by Clarendon on the character of Sir Harry Vane.

shrink from their reproaches; but fairly acknowledged that the measure, with all its demerits, was his. He reminded them that acts or promises of indemnity ought to be held sacred; that fidelity in the observation of them was the only foundation on which any government could hope to tranquillize civil commotions; and that, if the people once thought these promises were made to deceive, all confidence between them and their sovereign would be at an end. "It was," he added, "the making these promises which had brought the king home: and it was the keeping them which must keep him there." The angry royalists were not to be appeased by such arguments: The king, they said, had in truth passed *an act of oblivion and of indemnity*; of oblivion to his friends, and of indemnity to his enemies. *

It was from no deficient compassion to the unfortunate royalists that Clarendon resisted their remonstrances. Willingly would he have given them relief by any expedient which did not endanger the renewal of civil convulsions; and such an expedient he was hopeful of having discovered, previous to the restoration. It was concerted between him and the king, that the principal offices of the state should be bestowed on the most able and meritorious servants; but with the express provision, that

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 240.

his majesty should retain the right of nominating their subordinate officers. By this means, Clarendon calculated that the king would be enabled to make a competent provision for the most deserving royalists, without either infringing his promises of indemnity, or unprofitably wasting the public treasure. But this well devised scheme became wholly abortive. Monk, now created Duke of Albemarle, was allowed, in consideration of his great services, to engross several posts of extensive patronage; and it was not advisable to disgust him by interfering with the disposal of his subordinate offices. These, to the great scandal of the public, he sold to the highest bidder; * and the unfortunate royalists, who had nothing left to bribe his avarice, were obliged to give place to men who had

* Continuation, p. 46. Clarendon informs us, that Monk himself, out of a deference to the king, would have admitted to his subordinate offices some of those persons who had actually received the royal promise; but that his wife, who even exceeded him in avarice, would hear of no consideration but money. Monk, indeed, appears to have yielded this point to his wife with little reluctance, for Clarendon assures us that whatever other arguments might have been used, "profit was always the highest reason with him." (Ibid. p. 126.) Had Monk bestowed his patronage from more honourable motives, we have reason to suspect his discernment would not have led him to any very proper choice. It was, on one occasion, represented to him that a person whom he had recommended for a Secretary of State was not fit for that function. "Not fit!" replied Monk, "why he can speak French, and write short-hand!"

grown rich by the spoils of their country. The privilege which had been granted to Albemarle could not, with decency, be refused to other ministers; and patronage was thus left to flow unobstructed in its ancient channel. The impatience of the royalists had also given to Charles some disgusts which rendered him much less solicitous about their interests. A few hours after he landed in Kent, he found himself beset by a crowd of these men, who, to seize the first opportunity, compelled him to give them audience, recounted their sufferings and losses, and entreated, as a compensation, the immediate grant of some offices on which they had fixed their eyes.* The prejudice excited by these unseasonable importunities was strengthened, when he found his patronage so circumscribed that he could gratify them only from the money destined for his darling pleasures. Too many of the unfortunate royalists had contracted habits of intoxication, which rendered them unfit for any active employment: nor had either the remembrance of their sufferings, or the joy of the restoration, mitigated the mutual animosities which had embittered their adversity. Every one was more deeply wounded to see another gratified, than himself disappointed. Charles, equally disgusted with their importunities and their quarrels, sought a refuge

* Continuation, p. 8.

from these, as well as from all other cares, amidst the festive riots of his court. *

Next to the act of indemnity, the most important object was the establishment of a revenue for the crown. On this occasion, the parliament displayed a liberality consonant to the joyful feelings of the nation, yet adopted some salutary provisions in regulating the public expenditure. They provided for the discharge of the national debts; and, to prevent the sums voted from being diverted to other purposes, they appointed persons accountable to themselves to watch over the receipt and disbursement. † They voted to the king a permanent annual revenue of twelve hundred thousand pounds, a sum greatly exceeding the allowance to any of his ancestors: but, by allowing his private appointments to remain confounded with the funds of the public, they left an opening to abuses and jealousies, which were afterwards attended with very pernicious effects. The clergy, who had hitherto always taxed themselves in convocation, and had been induced, by their closer connection with the crown, to give higher contributions than the laity, now voluntarily relinquished this unprofitable privilege, and submitted to the general taxation imposed by parliament. From that period, the convocation, being no longer subservient to the views

Settlement of the revenue.

* Continuation, p. 35, 37, 39. † Ibid. p. 138.

of government, ceased to be regularly assembled, and has at last fallen into total neglect.

Exertions for the prerogative.

In the decision of questions where the interests of the king and the people interfered, it seems to have been the uniform aim of Clarendon to bring things back, as nearly as possible, to their situation before the commencement of the civil commotions.* He was unwilling to see the people deprived of any privileges which they had then enjoyed; but, from a review of late events, he considered the prerogative as more in danger than the liberties of the subject. He procured the restoration of the militia to the crown; and the repeal of that act which entitled the representatives of the people to assemble of themselves, at the expiration of three years, if the king did not in that period summon them to parliament. This act Clarendon brands as infamous, and inconsistent with all government; † yet those who lived to the end of the reign of

* He tells us, "he did never dissemble from the time of his return with the king, whom he had likewise prepared and disposed to the same sentiments whilst his majesty was abroad, that the late rebellion could never be extirpated and pulled up by the roots, till the king's regal and inherent power and prerogative should be fully avowed and vindicated; and till the usurpations in both houses of parliament, since the year 1640, were disclaimed and made odious; and many other excesses, which had been affected by both, before that time, under the name of privileges, should be restrained or explained." Continuation, p. 727.

† Continuation, p. 420.

Charles II. had often to lament the want of effectual means to secure the frequent assembling of the legislature.

In some points of administration the Chancellor seems to have been disposed to wield the rod of power with too high a hand. The excessive dissipation, into which the court speedily fell, became the general theme of public conversation; and, in the taverns and coffee-houses, to which, in that age, persons of both sexes daily crowded, the example of the king and courtiers was usually urged as an apology for gross irregularities. Charles could ill bear that royal trespasses should be the usual topic in the mouths of the multitude; and applied to the Chancellor to devise some remedy for this growing evil. Clarendon admitted that it ought to be repressed; but, instead of assuring him that the reformation of his conduct was the only effectual means of stopping the evil tongues of men, he complaisantly proposed two expedients; "either a proclamation to forbid all persons to resort to those houses, and so totally to suppress them; or the employment of spies, who, being present in the conversation, might be ready to charge and accuse the persons who had talked with most licence on a subject that would bear complaint." The king was pleased with both expedients; but, on being debated in the privy-council, the project of *espion-*

nage was abandoned, on the ground that it would diminish the revenue arising from coffee! *

Policy towards Scotland.

The most unwise part of Clarendon's counsels was that which regarded the government of Scotland. Cromwell, after reducing the Scots under the strictest military despotism, had established numerous forts and garrisons, which rendered the recovery of their freedom wholly hopeless. Clarendon, who thought that the Scots and their covenant could not be too closely watched, was of opinion that this system of military coercion should be continued, and Scotland treated as a conquered nation. This ruinous policy, which would have quickly reduced Scotland to a situation not less calamitous than that of Ireland, was successfully resisted. †

Regulation of the national judicature.

The system pursued by Clarendon, in regulating the national judicature, deserves the highest praise. He showed his love of liberty, by making no attempt to revive the courts of the Star Chamber and High Commission, which had been, however unjustly, regarded as main props of the sovereign power; and which the complaisant Parliament would probably not have scrupled to re-establish. He filled every department of the judicial functions with men of known attachment to

* Continuation, p. 678, 679.

† Ibid. p. 409. Burnet, Vol. I. p. 151.

the government, yet of acknowledged morality and talents. Some grave and learned judges, who had sat on the bench in the time of Cromwell, were again raised to the same situation; and among these the name of Sir Matthew Hale has obtained particular celebrity.* We readily enter into the triumph which Clarendon expresses at having restored to the nation the blessings of a regular judicature. "Denied it cannot be," says he, "that there appeared, sooner than was thought possible, a general settlement in the civil justice of the kingdom: no man complained without remedy; and, every man dwelt again under the shadow of his own vine, without any complaint of injustice and oppression."† He set an eminent example of diligence and integrity in his own judicial conduct: and it is allowed by all, that the office of Lord Chancellor was never more uprightly administered.

Settlement of religion.

Fortunate had it been for the memory of Clarendon, if the same good sense and benevolence, which guided his civil policy, had governed his religious opinions. But, in these, prejudice triumphed over his better judgment; and we find him breathing sentiments, which, in a darker age, would have led him to promote the most cruel persecution. From his early youth, he had im-

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 254. † Continuation, p. 48.

bibed the maxim of *no bishop, no king*, as an infallible truth; and had conscientiously instilled into the mind of his sovereign the doctrine, that Episcopacy is the only form of church-government compatible with monarchy. In defence of this favourite tenet, he had entered into acrimonious contests with the dissenters: and as he knew that he had incurred their lasting hatred, by prepossessing both Charles and his father against them, he repaid their animosity by an equally keen aversion. Their desire to prevent him from sharing in the triumph of the Restoration, gave a new edge to his angry feelings; and, in his memoirs of these times, whenever he has occasion to mention them, he is unable to conceal the antipathy that rankled in his breast. *

The most wise and moderate of the ministers, and among others the Earl of Southampton, were of opinion that nothing could conduce so much to public tranquillity as to follow up the act of indemnity with an act of toleration. As the Pres-

* His prejudices always discover themselves in bitter invectives; and, when he finds an example of unprincipled conduct in individuals of the hated sect, he hastens to draw a general conclusion from it with regard to the spirit of the whole body. In one passage he adduces two instances of chicane in Presbyterian ministers; "by which," he adds, "if the humour and spirit of the Presbyterians were not enough discovered and known, their want of ingenuity and integrity would be manifest, and how impossible it is for men who would not be deceived to depend on either." Continuation, p. 341.

byterians differed nothing in doctrine from the Church of England, and were equally the friends of a regular ecclesiastical establishment, they might, it was supposed, be reconciled to Episcopacy by some partial concessions in respect to forms; and the two predominant bodies of religionists be thus united in support of the government. But to all these lenient propositions Clarendon declared his decided opposition.* He asserted that nothing

* Burnet imagines that Clarendon was originally friendly to the conciliatory system; but that, in consequence of some private obligations received from the bishops, he went over to their violent measures; and, by this versatility, disgusted his friend Southampton. But the statements, as well as the strain of sentiments, in Clarendon's later writings, are so irreconcileable to this account, that there seems very little doubt that the bishop was misinformed. In the Continuation of his Life, Clarendon thus enlarges on this subject:—"It is an unhappy policy, and always unhappily applied, to imagine that that class of men (the dissenters) can be recovered and reconciled by partial concessions, or granting less than they demand. And if all were granted, they would have more to ask, somewhat as a security for the enjoyment of what is granted, that shall preserve their power, and shake the whole frame of the government. Their faction is their religion: nor are those combinations ever entered into upon zeal and substantial motives of conscience, how erroneous soever; but consist of many glutinous materials of will, and humour, and folly, and knavery, and ambition, and malice, which make men cling inseparably together, till they have satisfaction in all their pretences, or till they are absolutely broken and subdued, which may always be more easily done than the other. And if some few, how signal soever, (which often deceives us,) are separated and divided from the herd upon reasonable overtures, and secret rewards which make the overtures look the more reasonable; they are but so many single men, and have no

was to be expected from acts of conciliation: that concession would only render the sectaries more presumptuous and ipsolent in their demands: and that no means could improve either their faith or their loyalty, but a system of rigorous and active coercion. *

These opinions of the chancellor, seconded by a parliament devoted to the king and to episcopacy, became the standard for adjusting the religious disputes of the nation. The Church of England was restored to the model of the days of Queen Elizabeth: the ring, the cross, the surplice, the altar, again became stumbling-blocks to weak consciences: an act of uniformity was passed, which compelled all the clergy to express, by an oath, their attachment to the revived ceremonies: and the ensuing day of St Bartholomew was appointed as the term at which they must either conform to this condition, or abandon their livings. This oath, that it might be a test of loyalty as well as of reli-

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more credit and authority (whatever they have had) with their companions, than if they had never known them, rather less. Being less mad than they were, makes them thought to be less fit to be believed. And they, whom you think you have recovered, carry always a chagrin about them, which makes them good for nothing, but for instances to divert you from any more of that kind of traffic."

* "Nothing," says he, "but a severe execution of the law can ever prevail upon that class of men to conform to government." Continuation, p. 143.

gion, contained a clause by which the clergy were to subscribe to the doctrine of *passive obedience* in its fullest extent; and to declare their conviction, that no oppression and cruelty on the part of the sovereign could justify his subjects in taking arms against his authority. A doctrine so revolting to common sense disgusted many even of the royalists. The virtuous Earl of Southampton, though the strenuous friend of Clarendon, openly dissented from him on this occasion; and declared, that if such an oath were to be imposed on the laity, he would himself refuse it. * Nor had the clergy lost the spirit of civil and religious freedom. On the decisive day of St Bartholomew, two thousand of them quitted their benefices; and preferred poverty to affluence when purchased by an oath which they accounted infamous. The clergymen, who had been deprived of their livings by the revolutionary government, had still been allowed a portion of their former revenues for their maintenance: but those now ejected were denied the most slender provision. Nor was this all; by a subsequent ordinance, conventicles were suppressed, and the dismissed clergy were prohibited from earning a scanty livelihood by the exercise of their profession. † The provisions of the five-mile-act were

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 329.

† The act against conventicles is applauded by Clarendon as a

still more cruel. By its regulations, no dissenting teacher, who had not taken the oath of passive obedience, was allowed, except in travelling the road, to approach nearer than five miles to any place where he had preached since the act of indemnity: and thus these indigent men were compelled to wander among strangers, deprived of that relief which their former friends and acquaintance might have administered to their distresses. *

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measure of peculiar efficacy. "If it had been vigorously executed," says he, "it would no doubt have produced a thorough reformation." (Continuation, p. 421.) So apt are even wise men, where their prejudices are concerned, to form conclusions in opposition to the most universal experience! The rigours of this act were extreme. Justices of the peace were allowed to convict offenders without a jury. Any meeting for religious worship, at which five were present more than the family, was declared a conventicle. Every person above sixteen, that attended it, was to be imprisoned three months, or to pay L.5 for the first offence: for the second offence, to be imprisoned six months, or pay L.20: and for the third offence, on conviction by a jury, to be banished to the plantations, or pay L.100.

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 328. This act was strongly opposed by the Earl of Southampton, and by Dr Earl, Bishop of Salisbury, the most esteemed of the prelates. The favour which the ejected clergy obtained among the people, by their conscientious firmness and their sufferings, was much increased by the avarice of some of the bishops, who, as Clarendon himself informs us, prosecuted their claims for arrears with an eagerness and severity, which respected neither the loyalty, the sufferings, nor the poverty of their debtors. (Continuation, p. 185.) Yet Clarendon had endeavoured to select prelates distinguished for learning and zeal; though, indeed, he was sometimes obliged to yield to other considerations,

While the unfortunate prejudices of Clarendon contributed to renew the distractions of England, they proved still more prejudicial to the tranquillity of Scotland. As the support of Episcopacy was found to be a sure road to favour at court, there

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Among the most importunate claimants, who demanded patronage as their due, was Dr Gauden, the author of the *Eikon Basiliké*, which loyal credulity so long attributed to the pen of Charles the First. Gauden did not posses loyalty enough to bury his share of the transaction in oblivion, or to forego so fair a claim to royal patronage. He whispered his great *arcanum*, as he calls it, into the unwilling ears of the king and his principal courtiers; and, having produced witnesses of the fact, made no scruple of importunately demanding a reward equal to his merits. In one of his letters to Clarendon, he refreshes his memory by the following narrative of this transaction. After stating that his services had been too much overlooked in regard to that work which "goes under the late blessed king's name, *the sixon* or portraiture of his majesty in his solitude and sufferings," he proceeds: "This book and figure was wholly and only my invention, making, and design, in order to vindicate the king's wisdom, honour, and piety. My wife, indeed, was conscious to it, and had a hand in disguising the letters of that copy which I sent to the king in the Isle of Wight, by the favour of the late Marquis of Hertford, which was delivered to the king by the now Bishop of Winchester. His majesty graciously accepted, owned, and adopted it as his sense and genius; not only with great approbation, but admiration. He kept it with him; and though his cruel murderers went on to perfect his martyrdom, yet God preserved and prospered this book to revive his honour, and redeem his majesty's name from that grave of contempt and abhorrence, or infamy, in which they aimed to bury him. When it came out, just upon the king's death—good God! what shame, rage, and despite filled his murderers! What comfort his friends! How many enemies did it convert! How many hearts did it mol-

was not wanting a numerous body of Scottish lords and gentlemen, who asserted that their countrymen had become disgusted with Presbytery; and that the re-establishment of Episcopacy there would not only be easy, but infinitely gratifying to the majority of the nation. In this welcome opinion

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lify and melt! What devotions it raised to his posterity, as children of such a father! What preparations it made in all men's minds for this happy restoration, and which, I hope, shall not prove my affliction! In a word, it was an army, and did vanquish more than any sword could. My lord, every good subject conceived hopes of restoration—meditated revenge and reparation. Your lordship and all good subjects, with his majesty, enjoy the real and now ripe fruits of that plant: O let not me wither! who was the author, and ventured wife, children, estate, liberty, life, and all but my soul, in so great an achievement, which hath filled England, and all the world, with the glory of it. I did lately present my faith in it to the Duke of York, and by him to the king; both of them were pleased to give me credit, and own it a rare service in the horrors of those times. True, I played this best card in my hand something too late; else I might have sped as well as Dr Reynolds and some others; but I did not lay it as a ground of ambition, nor use it as a ladder." A ladder, however, it proved, both secure and lofty: for although Gauden was abundantly obnoxious both to the Chancellor and the bishops, from having taken the covenant, yet neither were his claims to be denied, nor his importunities resisted. He was successively created Bishop of Exeter and of Worcester. His letters of solicitation to Clarendon and others, in which he descants at large on the transcendent merits of his *arcanum*, are preserved in the Supplement to Clarendon's State Papers. They were published for the first time in the year 1786; and it is owing to the want of this decisive evidence, that Hume and many other authors are inclined to give Charles the merit of writing the *Eikon*.

Clarendon had been confirmed by the arts of Dr Sharpe, who, by solemn protestations of his inviolable devotion to Presbytery, had gained the confidence of his brethren, and was deputed to advocate their cause at court; after which he availed himself of this commission to accelerate the introduction of Episcopacy, and to procure for himself the primacy of Scotland. The policy adopted in consequence of these misrepresentations soon involved Scotland in all its former distractions. Episcopacy was established; religious opinions enforced by the sword of the civil magistrate; and disorders engendered which could be subdued only by the dangerous remedy of a new revolution.

Disinterestedness.

But while we lament the prejudiced views of Clarendon in religious matters, we must not forget the merits of his civil policy. If we consider the difficulties of that period of confusion and animosity, we must applaud the dexterity with which he overcame them. If we compare the course of government, while he directed our councils, with that of the latter years of the same reign, we must admire both his patriotism and virtue. His political sagacity, particularly in regard to commerce and foreign connections, may claim little commendation: but it has not been denied that he uniformly aimed at ends which his conscience approved. We discover no instance in which his authority was

employed for selfish purposes. Though his original fortune was small, and had been wasted during the civil commotions, he adopted no means to repair it, beyond the regular emoluments of his office as Chancellor. Both the king, and his colleagues in the ministry, sensible of the inadequacy of his fortune, endeavoured to force on his acceptance various grants of money and land: but, in that period of solicitation and expectancy, he thought he should best escape envy, by setting an example of that disinterestedness which he inculcated on others. It was only in some peculiar circumstances that he was induced to depart from this resolution. The Duke of Ormond, and some other of his most valued friends in the ministry, perceiving the incessant fatigue which he underwent, would have persuaded him to relinquish his judicial office of Chancellor, and devote himself entirely to affairs of state, under the appellation of Prime Minister. But Clarendon decided on declining a distinction so invidious, and recognised only in the unlimited government of France. He also knew that Charles, although extremely willing to purchase leisure for his pleasures, by consigning his whole government into the hands of his servants, was of all men most averse to be thought subject to the guidance of a favourite: and would speedily be disgusted with those remonstrances from a Prime

Minister, which he easily endured from his Chancellor. *

From the commencement of his ministry, Clarendon perceived that, however cautious his conduct, his exaltation would attract around him a cloud of envy. But his personal attachment to his sovereign was too great to make him shrink from the most obnoxious interference, when conducive to the interests of Charles. With the exception of a few favourites, whom he determined to gratify, the king uniformly referred the crowds of importunate suitors to the chancellor, who made no scruple to undertake the invidious part of rejecting all unreasonable requests. Even when Charles disposed of offices, contrary to his advice; Clarendon still justified the conduct of his prince; and thus often innocently incurred the odium of an improper distribution of patronage. † This uncommon devotion the king for some time repaid with the most obliging attentions. He listened to the chancellor's advice on every occasion, and seemed happy when he could prevail on him to accept any testimony of his esteem. When Clarendon was afflicted with the gout, which frequently happened, Charles always repaired to his house to consult on public affairs; and occasionally summoned the

Devotion to the king.

* Continuation, p. 85. † Burnet, Vol. I. p. 133.

privy-council to attend in the minister's bed-chamber. *

Shocked by the king's principles.

Yet, amidst all these marks of favour, there were circumstances in the conduct of the king, which must have given uneasy presages to the chancellor. Charles was a decided sceptic in regard to human virtue. He believed, that, if either man or woman practised sincerity or chastity, it was merely to save appearances, and gratify their vanity. No one, he thought, served him from attachment; and he viewed all around him with indifference as the selfish instruments of his ease and pleasures. † On a mind so prepossessed against the better sentiments of the heart, the disinterested zeal of Clarendon could make but a faint impression. When the chancellor refused the gifts of the king, as beyond his deserts, and tending to excite general envy against him; Charles was accustomed to remind him with a smile, that *it is better to be envied than pitied.* ‡ The French government, desirous to gain the good will of the English minister, instructed its agent to present him secretly with a large sum of money, which was to be con-

* The meetings of the Secret Committee, consisting of Clarendon, and some of his colleagues in whom he most confided, were usually held at Worcester House, then the residence of the chancellor; and were generally attended by the king and the Duke of York.

† Burnet, Vol. I. p. 131. ‡ Continuation, p. 83.

tinued as a yearly pension. Clarendon heard this proposition with indignation: but when he informed Charles of the insult which had been offeren to him, the king laughed in his face, and told him *he was a fool.** Even the kindest acts of Charles must have lost much of their grace, when the minister felt that they proceeded not from attachment, but from a mere aversion to labour.† And he had but too ample proof of the precarious tenure of a prince's favour, when a train of events, which shall now be explained, rendered his disgrace more convenient to the sovereign than his exaltation.

Conduct relative to his daughter's marriage: 1660.

While Clarendon attended his exiled master, his daughter had been received as a maid of honour into the family of the Princess of Orange, formerly Princess Royal of England; and had there embellished the natural charms of her person and wit, by the most admired accomplishments of a court. She had followed her father to England, and taken a conspicuous part in the festivities of the restoration; but the general attention which her attractions excited was converted into astonishment, when she was discovered to be pregnant, and declared the Duke of York to be her husband, and the father of her child. On this unexpected event, the court was immediately rent into violent fac-

* Continuation, p. 175. † Ibid. p. 88.

tions. The queen dowager hastened from France, to prevent her son from acknowledging a marriage, which, in her eyes, would fix an indelible stain on her lineage: and the duke himself was for some time moved by the calumnies, which were assiduously propagated against the object of his affections. But the king, who still entertained a just value for the services of his chancellor, declared, that, as the marriage was found on examination to be valid, he would on no account consent to its disavowal. At length, all opposition ceased; the duke, discovering the falsehood of his suspicions, acknowledged his wife; and the dowager queen received the duchess as her daughter. *

* Continuation, p. 50—75. The change in the queen's behaviour, which was sudden and unexpected, was afterwards discovered, to the astonishment of Clarendon, to have proceeded from the interference of his old enemy Cardinal Mazarine. Her majesty, finding that she could not prevent the marriage from being openly acknowledged, was preparing, in the height of her displeasure, to quit the English court, and return to France. But the Cardinal, whose policy led him to cultivate the friendship of every successive government of England, was by no means inclined to quarrel with the young king, or his favourite minister; and therefore wrote to the dowager queen, very plainly intimating, that, if she left her sons in displeasure, she would meet with no good welcome in France. The hint produced the intended effect. Her majesty quickly received the duchess as her daughter; and was reconciled to the chancellor with many gracious expressions of friendship. In closing the relation of this incident, Clarendon strongly characterizes the insincere and vindictive temper of this princess. "From that period," says he, "there did never appear any want

The behaviour of Clarendon, during this embarrassing transaction, was conspicuous for propriety. He solemnly declared that the whole transaction was as new to him as to the rest of the nation. He refused to take any steps towards vindicating the honour of a daughter, who, unknown to him, had wilfully subjected her family to danger and disgrace: and amidst the ferment of the court, he appeared the only man who was not concerned in the event. He would address no solicitations either to the Queen or the Duke of York; and when both of them began to give indications of a favourable disposition, he refused to make the first advances. He even went so far as, in his official capacity, to advise the king that the marriage should be disavowed, or the presumption of his daughter subjected to the penalties of treason. * Though we may distrust the sincerity of self-denial carried so far, it is apparent that he derived more apprehension than satisfaction from the unusual exaltation of his family. Observing his son elevated with the royal affinity, he sadly assured him that it would sooner or later prove the ruin of them all: and such, even then, were the hopes formed by his enemies. For the present, however, neither envy nor censure

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of kindness in the queen towards me, whilst I stood in no need of it, nor until it might have done me good." Continuation, p. 75.

* Continuation, p. 55.

seemed to be excited. The people were pleased to find that a wise and loyal minister was not to be dishonoured in his family, from an adherence to rules which had formerly been thought unnecessary in England. Charles behaved to him with all that gracious demeanour in which he knew to excel. Without the chancellor's privity, he caused a patent for a peerage to be made out for him, accompanied by a grant of twenty thousand pounds, to support the title: and the minister accepted these proofs of royal favour with a satisfaction that could be imparted only by his escape from a situation of great embarrassment. *

The marriage of the king.

The chancellor had, about this time, a considerable share in negotiating the marriage of the king. The people, who looked on the popish religion with dread and abhorrence, would have rejoiced to see their monarch united to a Protestant princess: but Charles was very indifferent about religion, and looked merely to the splendour of the alliance. He therefore willingly listened to the overtures of the Portuguese ambassador, who proffered the

* He was, on this occasion, created a baron, a title which he had often declined, as inconsistent with his limited fortune. He afterwards irritated the Duke of York by refusing the Order of the Garter: and it was only from an unwillingness to disoblige his Royal Highness, who reproached him as too proud to receive any favour through his means, that he was at length prevailed on to accept an earldom. Continuation, p. 82.

daughter of his sovereign, with a tempting dowry: five hundred thousand pounds in money, several commercial advantages, the town of Tangiers, on the coast of Africa, and the settlement of Bombay, in the East Indies. As the princess was reported to be of a mild and discreet temper, and Portugal was much less disliked than France or Spain, the choice was applauded by the ministers, the parliament, and the nation: and the same sentiments were expressed by Clarendon, who saw no reason to oppose the union, and who, of all men in the kingdom, could with least grace have opposed it, after the marriage of his own daughter to the heir apparent of the crown. While this negotiation was pending, the ambassador of Spain, whose court had not yet acknowledged the independence of Portugal, employed every art to frustrate the alliance; and procured some partisans in the English court to second his designs. Reports were spread that the princess was deformed; that she had various inherent distempers; that, from some natural defect, she was incapable of bearing children. Offers were made to the king, on the part of Spain, of a large dowry with any bride whom he should select from among the princesses of Italy; and the Earl of Bristol, who possessed a peculiar talent in that way, was employed to inflame his fancy with the description of their luxurious conversations. By these arts Charles was almost diverted from the

Portuguese alliance: but, on detecting the malice of the Spaniards, and on perceiving, from the representations of Clarendon and the other ministers, that it would be both foolish and dishonourable, on such vain grounds, to break off a negotiation so nearly concluded, he proceeded in the transaction with his original cordiality. On the arrival of his bride, he found no reason for dissatisfaction either in her manners or her person. *

The Duchess of Cleveland.

But Charles had already drunk deep of vices incompatible with conjugal felicity. Amidst his numerous favourites, he had been particularly capti-

* Some historians, Mr Hume in particular, as if to excuse the subsequent conduct of Charles, allege that the queen was homely, if not disgusting, in her person, and that the king thought so from the first. But there is the strongest evidence that this was not the case. Clarendon, who had an opportunity of knowing better than any writer, expressly says, "the queen had beauty and wit enough to make herself very agreeable to his majesty; and it is very certain, that, at their first meeting, and for some time after, the king had very good satisfaction in her." Continuation, p. 318. Lord Sandwich, the ambassador who brought her over, expatiates, in his letters, on the "most lovely and agreeable person of the queen." Supplement to State Papers, p. 20. The Earl of Portland, who attended the king at his marriage, writes to Clarendon, that his majesty, as soon as he saw the princess, was so well pleased with her, as readily to give way to some perplexing prejudices which she had in regard to the marriage ceremony. Ibid. p. 21. Bishop Burnet assures us, "he saw the letter which the king writ to the Earl of Clarendon the day after the marriage, by which it appeared very plainly, that the king was well pleased with her." Burnet, Vol. I. p. 253.

vated by the charms of Mrs Palmer, a lady of the race of Villiers, who was not more distinguished for her beauty than for the want of every virtue. Her undisguised amours with Charles had procured her the appellation of the royal mistress; and a son, whom she bore during the negotiations with Portugal, was openly acknowledged by the king as his own. When his young queen came over, Charles had formed some transient resolutions to estrange himself from his mistress; but, by the arts of the lady, and of the courtiers who depended on her favour, these impressions were speedily effaced from his mind. He had formed his notions of royal gallantry in the voluptuous court of France. He thought that a father or a husband ought to account his daughter or his wife not degraded but honoured by the embraces of his sovereign; and that the mistress of a prince ought to be regarded in a very different light from other concubines. In the same school he had learnt that the wife of a king ought to divest herself of the natural feelings of a woman, to permit the libertinism of her husband, and even receive his mistress on the footing of a companion. In conformity with these notions, he had the inhumanity, in the presence of the whole court, to introduce Mrs Palmer to the queen, a short time after his marriage. The wretched princess, though pierced to the heart by discovering the alienation of her husband's af-

fections, endeavoured to suppress her poignant feelings, and to receive the mistress with smiles. But the effort was beyond her strength. As she retired to her chair, the tears gushed from her eyes, the blood from her nose, and she fainted away.

Charles, instead of being melted, was enraged by an incident which so forcibly accused him of cruelty, and presaged an unwelcome disobedience to his commands. He now devoted his nights to dissolute revels: he took no pains to conceal the ascendancy of his mistress: he attempted to ennoble her by conferring the Earldom of Castlemain on her husband, who indignantly rejected this badge of his dishonour: and was so infatuated as to insist with his queen to receive his paramour as a lady of her bed-chamber. This new affront awakened all the spirit of the princess. She firmly refused to subscribe to her own degradation, and to admit into her train a woman who was lost to honour, and who had so deeply wounded her happiness. The people sympathized with her virtuous indignation; and even Charles could not withhold his esteem from the victim of his injustice. Yet, more alive to pride than to any generous feeling, he determined to subdue her spirit by severity. He dismissed her Portuguese attendants: he allowed his companions to jest with her name in their nocturnal debauches: and he gave very plain

intimation that all who looked for his favour must pay their court to his mistress. The queen now found herself consigned to cruel neglect: she saw the favourite of her husband lodged in her palace; and, even in her presence, receiving the homage of the nobility. The mistress was met, wherever she turned, by the sounds of gaiety; the queen alone seemed doomed to perpetual unhappiness. Her fortitude was unequal to such a trial: she gradually fell from that elevated tone in which she found no one to support her: and at length condescended to the humiliating art of caressing the object of her aversion. Charles triumphed in a degradation which lessened the public interest for the queen: and endeavoured, at a subsequent period, to add new dignity to his mistress, (who was now divorced from her husband,) by creating her Duchess of Cleveland. *

The adoption of such profligate principles in a court could not fail to afflict a virtuous minister. Clarendon had endeavoured, by every argument, to dissuade his sovereign from a conduct, which would blast his reputation, and shake his authority. He represented to him that such infamous connections were universally odious in England; "that a woman, who prostituted herself to the king, was equally infamous to all women of honour, and

* Continuation, p. 320—343.

must expect the same contempt from them, as if she were common to mankind; and that no enemy he had could advise him a more sure way to lose the hearts and affections of the people, than the indulging himself in such licentiousness." We learn with regret that the Chancellor, after this bold avowal, should have been prevailed on to undertake the task of persuading the queen to yield to her husband's commands, and to receive his mistress among the ladies of her bed-chamber. This compliance on the part of Clarendon seems to have proceeded from an anxious desire to conciliate the king and queen, and, in all other respects, his behaviour was entirely worthy of himself, and of his station. While the courtiers strove to distinguish themselves by their obeisance to the mistress, he disdained to countenance her by the slightest attention; and even refused to affix the great seal to any grant in which she was named. * The Earl of Southampton alone acted the same honourable part; and would never suffer her name to be inserted in the treasury books. From that time forward, Charles began to look with secret dissatisfaction on ministers whose morality was a permanent reproach on his own conduct; and to

* In consequence of this refusal, she was obliged to transmit to Ireland the patents for her new title, to pass under the seal of that kingdom.

give up his better judgment to the vindictive spirit of the mistress. *

While a foundation of dislike to the Chancellor was thus laid in the royal breast, some occurrences of a very different nature served to render him unpopular with the public. Cromwell, as a consideration for uniting his arms with France, had obtained the town of Dunkirk, which he had aided in wresting from the Spaniards. This acquisition gave general satisfaction as an equivalent for Calais, and the Protector had endeavoured to give it importance by strengthening the fortifications, and improving the harbour. But it was found to be a possession more popular than beneficial; and the yearly expence of the garrison (L. 120,000 Sterling) became an insupportable burden to the prodigal and necessitous Charles. This consideration having made the court very desirous to be rid of the charge, the military men readily discovered that the place was untenable by land, and useless as a naval station. A resolution was, therefore, speedily formed to dispose of it by sale to some continental power. As Spain was too poor to pay for it, and Holland too weak to retain it, France was selected as the proper purchaser; and, after some negotiation, the place was transferred to her, for about four hundred thousand pounds. The sale of Dunkirk. 1661.

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 239.

The odium, arising from a transaction which was accounted dishonourable, no less in itself, than from the uses to which the price was applied, fell very generally on the Chancellor, who was represented as its principal adviser and promoter. He assures his readers, however, that he was, at first, extremely averse to the measure; and that the sale was resolved on between the king and the other ministers, before his advice was asked.* He does not, however, deny that he was gained over by the arguments of his colleagues; and it is certain that he was very earnest in pressing the court of France to give favourable terms.† How far the transac-

* Continuation, p. 381.

† See the correspondence which passed between him and the French ambassador, the Count d'Estrade, on this occasion. If Clarendon does not utter the following sentiments, merely as a piece of diplomatic finesse, to enhance the value of the place, he certainly incurred, with open eyes, the reproach of this transaction. He thus writes to d'Estrade, August 9, 1661: "They who know any thing of the present temper of this kingdom must believe, that, as the delivery of that place would never be consented to by the parliament, or, in truth, by the privy-council, if it should be referred to their judgment, so the delivering it up by the king's immediate authority, will be as ungracious and unpopular an act to the whole nation as can be put in practice." These considerations Clarendon states as an argument for the king's demanding such a price, as would for some time enable him to do without the supplies which the parliament would, on this account, be disposed to refuse him. "I shall hold myself the most unfortunate man, if this affair be not crowned with success;" says he in another letter to d'Estrade.

tion itself deserves the reproach it has incurred, appears very doubtful. Neither the fortifications nor the harbour bore any comparison to their importance since Louis XIV. bestowed such vast sums on their improvement. The place, if tenable, might have proved a convenient inlet to our armies, and a desirable retreat in the event of disaster: it might have proved a station to our own, instead of the enemy's privateers. But it may reasonably be doubted whether these advantages could have counterbalanced the waste it must have occasioned of the national revenues.

The act of indulgence to dissenters.

The first open instance of displeasure, which the Chancellor experienced from the king, took its rise from a religious question. Charles had formed a strong attachment to the Romish religion, from its inculcating a blind submission to princes as well as to priests: and, before the Restoration, he had resolved, if he ever regained his throne, to mitigate the legal penalties which depressed a faith so congenial to his notions of government. He soon, however, perceived that there existed a strong prejudice against the Catholics, and that no favour could be extended to them without including the dissenters at large. Clarendon's inflexibility on these subjects being well known, the advisers of Charles acted without his knowledge: and it was with no small surprise that the Chancellor saw introduced into parliament, under the royal sanction,

a bill to invest the king with a discretionary power of dispensing, for a reasonable fine, with the penal laws against all religious sects. Charles, indeed, declared that the increase of his revenue by gracious acts of dispensation was his sole object in this measure: but the Chancellor concluded that the effect of such a dispensing power would be to give indulgence to the Catholics only, the Protestant dissenters being as odious to the king as to himself. * He therefore determined, in opposition to the king's earnest remonstrance, to resist the bill openly in the House of Lords; and, in spite of all the exertions of the courtiers, he succeeded in procuring its rejection. †

The king expressed the greatest indignation at this conduct of the Chancellor; and though he did not as yet find it convenient to withdraw his apparent kindness, he listened more readily to the arts employed to diminish the influence of the minister. The nightly club of licentious wits, with whom Charles now associated, became more direct in their ridicule, and Villiers, Duke of Bucking-

* The greater indulgence of the king to the Papists than the Protestant dissenters was well known to Clarendon. In the minutes of a conversation between the Chancellor and his majesty, which have been preserved, the king remarks, "For my part, rebel for rebel, I had rather trust a Papist rebel than a Presbyterian one." Supplement to State Papers, p. 47.

† Continuation, p. 469—473.

ham, who excelled as a mimic, often contributed to the mirth of the company by personating the formal motions, and grave enunciation of the Chancellor. If the king happened to say that he would ride or hunt next day, one would immediately lay a bet that he should not; "for," said he, "the Chancellor will never permit it." "Nay," another would rejoin, "I protest I cannot believe there is any ground for that imputation: though, indeed, such things are talked of abroad." On this, Charles, who could not endure to be thought under such restraint, would eagerly assure them that, unless in matters of public business, the Chancellor had not the slightest sway over him: and the wits would then, with a sneer, congratulate him on this discovery of his freedom. *

While such arts gradually alienated the mind of the prince from his minister, Clarendon felt himself extremely embarrassed in his public duties by the associates who were forced upon him. Henry Bennet, afterwards known as the Earl of Arlington, had so well paid his court to the mistress and the club of wits, that he was raised to the office of Secretary of State, which Sir Edward Nicholas had been induced to resign: and the Chancellor was thus at once deprived of a tried friend, and

* Continuation, p. 467.

associated with a personal enemy. * Sir William Coventry, who had acquired much credit with the king, by lessening the merits of other men; and Lord Ashley, who was true to any principle only as long as it served his views; were successively introduced into the most secret transactions of state: and Clarendon had now the mortification to see his counsels debated and thwarted by men, who had no other end but to exalt themselves on the ruin of his power. †

The Dutch War. 1665.

Their schemes were unfortunately promoted by a measure, in which he had to contest with folly and injustice on the part both of the king and the people. The Dutch had, at that period, carried commerce to an extent hitherto unknown; and the treasures, which they annually imported from the East and West Indies had become the admiration and envy of all Europe. The English, their most immediate rivals, beheld their success with peculiar jealousy; and a company of our countrymen, who had obtained a charter for the African trade, found their enterprises in that quarter wholly eclipsed by the superior industry and experience of the Dutch. Great discontent was expressed by these disappointed adventurers: the traffic of the Dutch was represented as an unjust encroachment on some sup-

* Continuation, p. 347, 372. † Ibid. p. 348, 466.

posed right of England to the exclusive commerce of that coast: and a war was suggested as the only effectual means of expelling our successful rivals. While the merchants, who, of all classes, seem most blind to the real interests of their country, were thus deluding themselves into the expectation of vast benefits from hostilities, the Duke of York, who panted for an opportunity to distinguish himself, eagerly seconded the clamour for war. * The king, unwilling to involve himself in any expence but for his pleasures, for some time resisted these counsels: till at length dazzled by the hope of rich prizes, and, perhaps, by the prospect of converting a portion of the supplies to his own private purposes, he determined to concur with the general wish. The Dutch, not less proud than their rivals, were easily forced by some insults into hostilities. †

* Continuation, p. 378.

† The English had already begun to maintain very high tenets with regard to the empire of the seas. They talked, says Clarendon, "of giving law to the whole trade of Christendom; of making all ships which passed by or through the narrow seas pay an imposition to the king of England. The rules prescribed to judge by in the prize-courts were such as were warranted by no former precedents, nor acknowledged to be just by the practice of any neighbouring nation; and such as would make all ships which traded for Holland, from what kingdom soever, lawful prize." Continuation, p. 461. These tenets Clarendon loudly condemns as a violation of all justice, and calculated to render all nations the enemies of England.

Clarendon, supported by no counsellor but the Earl of Southampton, opposed, by every argument, this ruinous national distemper. But all his patriotic efforts only drew on him the imputation of pusillanimity, of a want of public spirit, or of some treacherous understanding with the enemies of his country. At last, on seeing that the evil was inevitable, he consulted the interests of his master by advising him to procure adequate supplies, before the national zeal should cool, and the people, disappointed in their chimerical hopes, should begin to charge the consequences of their own folly on the misconduct of government. By his advice a supply of two millions and a half, a far greater sum than had ever been granted, was required from the parliament; and so popular was the cause, that this extraordinary dem and was acquiesced in without hesitation. *

The war was attended with brilliant success to our countrymen. The Dutch saw their naval commanders baffled; their fleets driven from the sea; their merchantmen destroyed in their very harbours. Yet even a succession of triumphs was insufficient to maintain the delusive enthusiasm of the people: the loss on our side was heavy: the young courtiers, who had hastened on board, to partake in a series of triumphs, gradually felt their ardour

Continuation, p. 440.

abated by the rude alarms of the enemy and the ocean. The Dutch, though often defeated, still seemed possessed of inexhaustible resources; and at length became more formidable than ever, when joined by the French, who could not quietly view the triumph of the English. The prizes, from which such sanguine hopes had been formed, enriched only a few adventurers; and the supplies voted by parliament were speedily consumed in extensive armaments. The people, who felt their dreams of sudden riches converted into demands for extraordinary contributions, were further depressed by a dreadful pestilence which ravaged the kingdom, and a fire which laid the metropolis in ashes: nor was it to be expected, amidst these complicated disasters, that considerable supplies could be procured from the dispirited nation. In these circumstances, Charles, who found the embarrassments of war become daily a more unseasonable interruption to his pleasures, readily hearkened to the overtures of peace, made by the French in behalf of themselves and their allies. Meantime, he resolved to diminish his expenditure by confining himself entirely to defensive measures, and fitting out no armament for the next season. This economical arrangement would enable him to convert to more grateful purposes a new supply of one million eight hundred thousand pounds, which had been granted by parliament.

The Dutch, who smarted under their late dis- 1667.

graces, perceived, in this remissness of their enemies, an opportunity of retaliation. Having equipped a powerful fleet, they suddenly entered the Thames; and, easily demolishing some feeble forts erected for the defence of the river, overwhelmed the capital with consternation. They took and plundered Sheerness, sailed up the Medway, and burnt several of the largest ships of the navy. They next steered their course to Portsmouth, to Plymouth, to Harwich; and after having insulted these places, and again sailed up the Thames as far as Tilbury, they returned in triumph to their own shores. The whole kingdom was filled with dismay and indignation: but it was no longer time to meditate revenge; and as the Dutch were now willing to accelerate a peace, a treaty was concluded, by which the English renounced every point for which they had ostensibly undertaken the war.

Extreme unpopularity.

The stream of popular reproach now ran violently against the Chancellor, who was stigmatised as the author of all disastrous counsels. The relaxation of the military preparations, the defenceless state of the Thames, * the unfavourable con-

* We cannot but smile at the manner in which Clarendon frees himself from this charge, which was entirely the concern of the military officers. He assures us "he was so totally unskilful in the knowledge of the coast and the river, that he knew not where *Sheerness* was, nor had ever heard of the name of such a place till the late events, nor had ever been on any part of the river with any other thought about him, than to get on shore as soon as could be possible." Continuation, p. 752.

ditions of the peace, were without scruple laid to his charge. No party was inclined to undertake his defence. The Catholics and the Dissenters looked on him as their implacable enemy; nor had the royalists forgot his share in the act of indemnity and oblivion. The courtiers saw in him an absorber of power, and a stern reprover of their licentiousness; and the death of his virtuous friend, the Earl of Southampton, * which took place in this unfortunate conjuncture, left him as unsupported in the council as in the nation. The populace, too apt to believe all reports which coincide with their passions, opened their ears to the grossest charges. He had resolved to erect a good family mansion on a piece of ground which he had received from the king, in the neighbourhood of St James's: but, by the unskilfulness or fraud of the architect, the edifice swelled to a palace, and the expence to fifty thousand pounds, three times

* The Earl of Southampton was not less obnoxious to the mistress and the courtiers than Clarendon. The king had been wrought up to a resolution of depriving him of the office of treasurer, but was diverted from this purpose by the earnest intercession of the chancellor. As his dissolution approached, the courtiers renewed their instances; and, when within five or six days of his death, they again persuaded the king to deprive him of the treasurer's staff. Clarendon, however, succeeded in preventing this act of royal ingratitude from giving a pang to the last moments of his friend. Continuation, p. 781. See in Appendix, p. xiv. Clarendon's opinion of this respected nobleman.

the original estimate. As such an expenditure was evidently inconsistent with his slender fortune, the populace readily believed that it was supported by the sale of the national interests. Some called the building *Dunkirk House*, and others *Holland House;* intimating that he had received bribes from the French and the Dutch to promote their views. *

Falls under the king's displeasure.

Nor was Charles displeased to see the popular clamour directed against the chancellor. The excessses of the court, which outraged every feeling of morality and decency, had excited violent discontents among the people, and a formidable opposition even in a parliament of royalists. The king had at length found his Commons, so lately the advocates of passive obedience, more ready to inquire into abuses than to grant supplies; and he was very willing to regain their favour by the sacrifice of a suspected minister. While he involved himself, by his weakness and prodigality, in the most irksome difficulties, † he was led, by

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 365.

† Charles could scarcely refuse the most unreasonable demand, when urged with importunity: but Clarendon assures us that this proceeded, both in this prince and in all his family, not from any generous liberality, but merely from imbecility. "They did not love," says the chancellor, "to deny, and less to strangers than to their friends; not out of bounty or generosity, which was a flower that did never grow naturally in the heart of either of the

the artful representations of his courtiers, to believe that the chancellor would use no influence to procure him supplies. He gave ear to a report that, at the period of the Restoration, this minister might easily have obtained for him a fixed revenue of two millions a year; but had declined it lest it should render the king too independent of Parliament. *

Another instance of supposed opposition, which Charles could less pardon, was also charged on Clarendon. A young lady of the name of Stewart had lately appeared at court, with every attraction which could inflame the breast of a lover. The king soon declared himself her passionate admirer; and as he found her virtue proof against all dishonourable advances, he resolved, if possible, to legitimate his addresses. His queen had brought him no children; and, though he knew that she had once at least been pregnant, he now countenanced a calumny, formerly circulated by the Spanish ambassador, that she was incapable, from some natural defect, of bearing children. On this ground, or on another allegation, that she had taken the vows of a religious order previous to her marriage, the king had formed a scheme of procuring a divorce by act of parliament. The opposition

families, that of Stuart or the other of Bourbon, but out of an unskilfulness and defect in the countenance." Continuation, p. 644.

* Continuation, p. 232. Wellwood's Memoirs.

which Clarendon made to a design, which, besides its injustice, might have involved the state in a disputed succession, received the harshest construction; and it was currently given out by the courtiers, that he had artfully seduced the king into a barren marriage, to secure the throne to his own descendants. While the divorce was in agitation, the object of the king's new attachment, unwilling to become involved either in dishonour or injustice, privately gave her hand to the Duke of Richmond; and the king, during the paroxysm of his anger at the discovery of this union, having conceived a suspicion that it was promoted by Clarendon, began to breathe implacable revenge against his innocent minister. *

Obnoxious to the Parliament.

During the consternation excited by the appearance of the Dutch fleet in the Thames, the Parliament had been hastily summoned, though under a prorogation for several months. Clarendon endeavoured to dissuade the king from assembling the members, while incensed by the recent disasters: and the disposition, which they immediately manifested, having justified this advice, it was found expedient to dismiss them till the period assigned by the prorogation. The members were displeased

* Clarendon solemnly assures us that he had no interference whatever in the marriage of the Duke of Richmond. He wrote to the king with protestations to the same purpose, but Charles was too angry to hearken to them. Continuation, p. 860.

with the authors of a counsel which deprived them of an opportunity to vent their discontents; and still more irritated by a report that the Chancellor had advised the king to dissolve them and summon a new parliament. Clarendon had, indeed, already made himself enemies in both houses by his attempts to recal them to moderation. He had offended the Commons by resisting their encroachments on the privileges of the peers; and the Lords, by advising them to renounce some obnoxious immunities, which they claimed for themselves and their servants. *

The Earl of Bristol, once known as the partriotic Lord Digby, had, during the exile of the king, embraced the Romish religion, with a view to the improvement of his fortunes; and having, in consequence, been deprived of the secretaryship of state, he conceived a bitter animosity against his former friend the Chancellor, to whom he unjustly attributed his loss of office. He had even had the folly to prefer an impeachment against the minister: and although this attempt, supported neither by proofs nor by reasonable allegations, had only exposed himself to ridicule, he continued actively to promote every cabal among the lords against Clarendon. The Duke of Buckingham, though a man of no principle, had the dexterity to at-

* Continuation, p. 730.

tach to himself a number of adherents; and after having intrigued with Cromwell, and subsequently ingratiated himself with the king, was now at the head of a formidable opposition in parliament. On one occasion, the Chancellor having detected him in a conspiracy to excite insurrection, advised the king to commit him to the Tower: on another occasion, he, from selfish views, opposed a bill introduced by Buckingham, to prevent the importation of Irish cattle into England. For both these reasons, Buckingham avowedly sought the overthrow of Clarendon; and actively concurred with the king's friends in preparing the parliament to attack him.

Deprived of his office.

In the meantime the king, growing impatient to be rid of his minister, intimated to him, through the Duke of York, a desire to accept his resignation; assuring him, at the same time, that this step proceeded from certain information that the parliament would impeach him, and that this was the only way to save him from the fate of Strafford. Clarendon, who had, a few days before, sustained a cruel affliction by the death of his wife, the faithful partner of all his fortunes, could not conceal his surprise at this unseasonable intimation. He demanded an audience, and there informed his majesty, that, though he should not regret to quit an office where his services were no longer ac-

ceptable, yet he would never, by a voluntary resignation, either show a willingness to desert the government in a season of difficulty, or a desire to avoid the scrutiny of parliament. He reminded the king, that Strafford, though not guilty of high treason, had committed many unjustifiable misdemeanours: but that, for his own part, he stood secure in conscious innocence; and that he should consider his removal from office, in such a conjuncture, as a measure intended, not to screen him from his enemies, but to expose him to their utmost resentment. The king was ill prepared for the language of independence: he considered the chancellor as setting his power at defiance; and refused to listen to the intercession of the Duke of York, who warmly interested himself in the cause of his father-in-law. In a few days, his majesty sent one of the Secretaries of State, with a warrant under the sign manual, to receive the great seal, which the chancellor immediately delivered into his hands. August 13, 1667.

But the enemies of Clarendon deemed their advantage insecure, so long as he should not be ruined in character, and expelled the kingdom. The Duke of Buckingham, who was now restored to full favour at court, did not fail to excite his partisans in parliament to a prosecution: and, by the orders of the king, the dependents of government Impeached of high treason.

promoted the same intrigues. * At length, an impeachment was drawn up by the Commons, consisting of fifteen articles, and exhibiting a lasting monument of the infamy of his accusers. In these it was alleged, that Clarendon had advised the king to discontinue parliaments, and govern by a standing army: that he affirmed the king to be a papist in his heart: that he had, from interested motives, deluded the king, and betrayed the nation in all foreign negotiations: † that he had received large sums of money for procuring illegal patents, and for various other nefarious transactions: that, by these practices, and by obtaining improper grants from the crown, he had suddenly accumulated an enormous estate: that he had effected the sale of Dunkirk far below its value: that he had introduced an arbitrary government into the plantations: and that he had advised some

* Among others who were very actively engaged in exciting the parliament against Clarendon was the Duke of Albemarle, (Monk,) who had formerly loaded him with professions of friendship. This man, who, with his wife, was resolved not to lose court favour on any account, now strenuously urged the members "no longer to adhere to the chancellor, since the king resolved to ruin him, and would look on all who were his friends as enemies to his majesty." Continuation, p. 857.

† The only gift, he assures us, which he ever received from a foreign prince, was a present of the books of the Louvre press from the French king. These must have been acceptable to him as a scholar. We have seen the indignation with which he rejected pecuniary offers from the same monarch.

naval operations which prevented a decisive victory over the enemy. These accusations, *all of which Clarendon offered to acknowledge if one of them could be proved,* * were found, on deliberation, to be far short of high treason: and though some resolute members declared, that, if any articles were introduced, which should indisputably amount to treason, they would pledge themselves to make it good, yet it was thought preferable to impeach him only in general terms, and to demand his imprisonment. With the last request the Lords refused to comply until specific charges should be produced against him; and they were indignant that the Commons should endeavour to alter the ancient forms of justice, by a precedent derived from the odious proceedings against Strafford.

A violent breach now ensued between the houses of Parliament; the Lords refused to commit a member of their house on a general charge; and the Commons represented this refusal as an obstruction to justice. From the obstinacy of the Commons in this point, Clarendon perceived that their object was to have him thrown into prison, where they might hope to detain him under various pretences, without proceeding to his trial: and there was no punishment of which he entertained a greater apprehension. † Yet for some time he re-

Leaves the kingdom. November 29, 1667.

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 374. † Continuation, p. 853.

sisted the importunities of his friends, who pressed him to withdraw from the storm; and it was not till he had received intimation that such a step would be acceptable to the king, that he at length acquiesced. He embarked at midnight on the Thames in a small vessel; and after being tossed about for three days, at length reached the first stage of his exile at Calais. *

He left behind him an address to the House of Lords, in which he satisfactorily vindicated himself from the misrepresentations of his enemies. He assured them that the greatness of his fortune, which had formed a pretence for so many groundless charges, existed only in the fancy of his accusers: that his whole property, after paying his debts, would not exceed two thousand pounds a-year: that such an estate might well be derived from the regular emoluments of his office: that he had, on one occasion, (which has been mentioned,) received twenty thousand pounds from the king, and on another six thousand, with some grants of land; but that he had never perverted justice for a bribe, nor set his interest to sale. Adverting to the other class of imputations thrown on him, as the uncontrolled director of public affairs, he declared that during the first two years of his majesty's reign, the period of his greatest influence, he

* Continuation, p. 867.

had communicated all his counsels to the other principal ministers of state: that, in succeeding years, his credit had gradually fallen so low, that his propositions were often rejected, and many measures undertaken against his advice, or even without his knowledge. He reminded them of his opposition to the war, which had involved the nation in so many calamities: and he observed, that if he had not resisted so many improper grants, and laboured to restrain so many excesses, he would not now have been surrounded by such an array of enemies. *

This address was communicated by the Lords to the Commons, and, from a wish, doubtless, to please the court, was declared by both houses to be an infamous libel, and condemned to be burnt by the hands of the hangman. His enemies would gladly have followed up this impotent revenge with an act of attainder, subjecting him to the penalties of treason for evading their jurisdiction: but they found it expedient to rest satisfied with an act, which for ever banished him from the British dominions, unless, before a limited day, he should appear to take his trial. †

Clarendon soon found that, by withdrawing from his enemies, he had not escaped the pursuit of mis- Ill treatment in France.

* Continuation, p. 871. Lives of the Lords Chancellor, Vol. I. p. 287.

† Continuation, p. 886.

fortune. The French government, being at that time desirous to enter into a close alliance with England, and understanding how obnoxious the Chancellor was both to the court and the people, resolved not to prejudice their interests by generosity to an exile; and therefore dispatched a messenger after him to Rouen, with orders for his immediate departure from the dominions of France. Though exhausted by a journey in the depth of winter, and labouring under a severe attack of the gout, which had deprived him of the use of his limbs, he hastened to quit this inhospitable land, and directed his course towards Calais, in doubt whether a surrender into the hands of his enraged countrymen would not be preferable to a dependence on the precarious compassion of foreigners. But on his arrival at that town, his distempers had increased to such violence, that the physicians declared his removal could scarcely fail to be attended with immediate death.

While he lay extended in agony, the French messenger, who had accompanied him to Calais, appeared by his bedside, and informed him that he had received new orders from the king to insist on his instant departure from France. Clarendon, shocked at the inhumanity of such a message, exclaimed, "You must bring orders from God Almighty, as well as from your king, before I can obey. Your king," continued he, "is a very great

and powerful prince, yet not so omnipotent as to give a dying man strength to undertake a journey." He then sent for the magistrates and the lieutenant-governor of the town; who, moved by the strange vicissitudes of his fortune, and blushing for the inhospitable policy of their government, united in a warm remonstrance to the court against the cruelty of his treatment. *

But the French court was already disposed, by other circumstances, to alter its conduct. The hopes of an alliance with England were now entirely dissipated, by the Triple League between England, Holland, and Sweden, concluded at the Hague by Sir William Temple: the English government was therefore to be mortified by caresses to the obnoxious exile. Clarendon now received letters full of kindness from the ministers of France; and a special permission from the court to take up his abode in any quarter of its dominions. He accepted this tardy civility; but his sufferings had not as yet reached their termination. As he travelled through Normandy, he accidentally met at Evreux with a company of English soldiers, who had entered the service of the French king. These men, no sooner recognized the exiled minister, than, inflamed with the prejudices of their countrymen, they resolved to revenge their national grievances.

* Continuation, p. 892.

They forced their way into the inn where he lodged; wounded his attendants; and, after covering himself with bruises, were proceeding to put an end to his life, when he was rescued from their barbarous hands.*

Residence at Montpelier.

After spending some time in different towns of France, he at length fixed his abode at Montpelier, where he experienced that distinguished reception which was due to his reputation and misfortunes. The society of some esteemed English friends, who had repaired thither for the benefit of the climate, gave an additional charm to the civilities of the inhabitants; and, after so many agitations, his mind began to partake of that cheerful tranquillity which had been diffused over it in the retirement of Jersey. He now resumed those literary labours which business, splendid but vexatious, had so long interrupted. He completed his History of the Rebellion; and drew up, for the benefit of his descendants, those memoirs of his private views and transactions which throw such important light on his character and his contemporaries. †

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* Continuation, p. 900.

† Besides these well-known works, he left in manuscript a Historical Account of the Troubles of Ireland during the English Civil Wars. It was first published in 1721. He also wrote an Answer to Hobbes's Leviathan, with various religious tracts, which are printed in a folio volume. His printed works, including the State Papers, amount to more than eight volumes folio. The simplicity and

One poignant affliction yet awaited him. His favourite daughter, the Duchess of York, had been, like her husband, shaken in her attachment to the Protestant faith, and had privately embraced the Romish religion.* Clarendon, deeply wounded by this intelligence, wrote her a letter full of dignity and tenderness, entreating her to reconsider more maturely the fallacies by which she had been misled; and representing the reproach and ruin which her apostacy would bring on all her connections. At the same time he wrote to the Duke of York, who had not yet openly acknowledged himself a Catholic, warning him of the dangerous consequences to his interests, unless he could, by authority and persuasion, reclaim his wife from a superstition so odious in England.† These efforts were ineffectual; but the mortification which he experienced would have been alleviated could he have foreseen that, when this prince and his fami-

Apostacy of his daughter.

candour of his narrative is more to be admired than either his manner or his reflections. He excels most in the delineation of characters, of which he is very fond; and his observations on the conduct of life are far more valuable than his political speculations. The tediousness of his perplexed and ill-assorted style is at times apt to overcome even the interest of the narrative. The most favourable specimen of his composition may be seen in the characters which he draws of Lord Digby, Sir John Berkley, and Sir Henry Bennet. These are inserted in the Supplement to the State Papers.

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 333. † Supplement, p. 37.

ly should be deprived of their throne for their adherence to the Romish religion, the posterity of his daughter should give two Protestant queens to the British empire.

Desire to revisit England.

Neither the society nor the beauties of Montpelier could efface from the mind of Clarendon a tender recollection of his native country. At length he quitted the south of France, and took up his residence at Rouen, as a nearer approach to the beloved shores of England. At the commencement of his exile, even his children had not been permitted to visit him; and when this severe prohibition was withdrawn, he wrote to the king with the gratitude and humility of a mind softened and subdued by affliction. He added a petition to his expressions of thankfulness: "If your majesty's compassion towards an old man, who hath served the crown above thirty years, in some trust, and with some acceptation, will permit me to end my days, which cannot be many, in my own country, and in the company of my own children, I shall acknowledge it as a great mercy; and do so entirely resign myself to your majesty's pleasure, that I do assure your majesty, if the bill of banishment were by your grace repealed, I would sooner go into the Indies than into England, without your particular direction or licence." *

* Supplement to State Papers, p. 40.

When seven years had passed over his head in exile, he again ventured to renew his fruitless supplications. He wrote to the king, to the queen, and to the Duke of York, humbly entreating a gracious permission to die in his own country. "Seven years was a time prescribed by God himself for the expiration of some of his greatest judgments; and it is full that time since I have, with all possible humility, sustained the insupportable weight of the king's displeasure: so that I cannot be blamed if I employ the short breath that is remaining in me, in all manner of supplications, which may contribute to the lessening this burthen that is so heavy upon me." The utmost of his wishes seemed no unsuitable boon to a man who had wasted his life in the service of his sovereign. "Since it will be in nobody's power," says he, "long to keep me from dying, methinks the desiring a place to die in should not be thought a great presumption; nor unreasonable for me to beg leave to die in my own country, and amongst my own children." * But to a prince without feelings of humanity or virtue such supplications were unavailing. A few months after writing these letters Clarendon paid the debt to nature, more exhausted by his misfortunes and premature infirmities than by length of years. He died at Death.

* Supplement to State Papers, p. 45.

Rouen, on the seventh of December 1674, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

The close of Clarendon's life awakens a more tender regret, than if we had been led to contemplate his magnanimous deportment on the scaffold. Whether, indeed, we view the progress or the termination of his career, we discover more frequent occasion for compassion than for envy. Even in his highest exaltation he foresaw his fall; for his mind was fully impressed with the jealousy of courtiers, and the inconstancy of the public. His undeviating virtue, in a corrupt age, and amidst the temptations both of prosperity and misfortune, attracts our admiration more forcibly than either the reach of his talents, or the elevation of his views. His religion, as well as his policy, was clouded with prejudices; but while we lament a weakness inseparable from humanity, we honour the uncontaminated rectitude of his intentions. His chief failing seems to have been too entire devotion to a prince who did not deserve his generous attachment. Yet could he never subdue his mind to the pliant principles or supple manners of a court; and as he expressed his sentiments without regard to rank, he incurred the imputation of that haughty and uncomplying demeanour, which is so often united with the possession of power. The pride of office, however, seems little consistent with the soundness of his judgment; and, in that eventful

age, he could not look around him without seeing examples of the instability of greatness, which would chastise the most flattering suggestions of human presumption. In the meridian of his power, when he repaired to his country residence at Cornbury, the neighbouring nobility and gentry hastened to pay their obeisance to the favourite minister of their sovereign. Among others, it is said, Lenthal, the Speaker of the Long Parliament, and once, from his station, the most conspicuous man in the kingdom, came to visit the Chancellor. As he passed along the hall to the place where the minister stood, the company on either hand amused themselves with petulant jests on his altered condition, and humbled demeanour. Lenthal observed their countenances, and addressing himself with a smile to Clarendon, "These very gentlemen," said he, "who now come to pay their respects to your Lordship, have formerly done the same to me." *

* See Appendix, p. xv.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

[CHARACTERS, from Clarendon, of several of the Ministers, Parliamentary Speakers, and other public men mentioned in the text. The references subjoined to each character are to be understood of the early edition (1712) of Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, in three large octavos: where "Life" is prefixed, the reference is to the octavo edition of the "Life and Continuation of Clarendon," also in three large octavos.]

JOHN HAMPDEN.

HE was a gentleman of a good extraction, and a fair fortune, who, from a life of great pleasure and licence, had, on a sudden, retired to extraordinary sobriety and strictness, and yet retained his usual cheerfulness and affability, which, together with the opinion of his wisdom and justice, and the courage he had showed in opposing the ship-money, raised his reputation to a very great height, not only in Buckinghamshire, where he lived, but generally throughout the kingdom. He was not a man of many words, and rarely begun the discourse, or made the first entrance upon any business that was assumed; but a very weighty speaker; and after he had heard a full debate, and observed how the House was like to be inclined, took up the argument, and shortly, and clearly, and craftily so stated it, that he commonly conducted it to the conclusion he desired; and if he found he could

not do that, he was never without the dexterity to divert the debate to another time, and to prevent the determining any thing in the negative, which might prove inconvenient in the future. He made so great a show of civility, and modesty, and humility, and always of mistrusting his own judgment, and esteeming his with whom he conferred for the present, that he seemed to have no opinions or resolutions, but such as he contracted from the information and instruction he received upon the discourses of others, whom he had a wonderful art of governing, and leading into his principles and inclinations, whilst they believed that he wholly depended upon their counsel and advice. No man had ever a greater power over himself, or was less the man that he seemed to be, which shortly after appeared to every body, when he cared less to keep on the mask. He was of an industry and vigilance not to be tired out, or wearied by the most laborious; and of parts not to be imposed upon, by the most subtle or sharp; and of a personal courage equal to his best parts; so that he was an enemy not to be wished, wherever he might have been made a friend, and as much to be apprehended where he was so, as any man could deserve to be. In a word, what was said of Cinna might well be applied to him: "He had a head to contrive, a tongue to persuade, and a hand to execute any mischief." He was killed in a skirmish in 1643. Vol. I. 105; II. 265.

JOHN PYM.

No man had more to answer for the miseries of the kingdom, or had his hand or head deeper in their contrivance; and yet, I believe, they grew much higher even in his life than he designed. He was a man of a private quality and condition of life; his education in the office of the exche-

quer, where he had been a clerk, and his parts rather acquired by industry than supplied by nature, or adorned by art. He had been well known in former parliaments, and was one of those few who had sat in many; the long intermission of parliaments having worn out most of those who had been acquainted with the rules and orders observed in those conventions. This gave him some reputation and reverence amongst those who were but now introduced. In the short parliament (April 1640) he spoke much, and appeared to be the most leading man; for, besides the exact knowledge of the former, and orders of that council, which few men had, he had a very comely and grave way of expressing himself, with great volubility of words, natural and proper; and understood the temper and affections of the kingdom as well as any man; and had observed the errors and mistakes in government, and knew well how to make them appear greater than they were. He died towards the end of December 1643. Vol. II. 462.

OLIVER St JOHN, Solicitor-General.

He was a lawyer of Lincoln's-Inn, known to be of parts and industry, but not taken notice of for practice in Westminster-Hall, till he argued at the Exchequer Chamber the case of ship-money, on the behalf of Mr Hampden, which gave him much reputation, and called him into all courts, and to all causes, where the King's prerogative was most contested. He was a man reserved, and of a dark and clouded countenance; very proud, and conversing with very few, and those men of his own humour and inclinations. He made good the confidence of his party, by not in the least degree abating his malignant spirit, or dissembling it; but with the same obstinacy opposed every thing which might

advance the King's service, when he was his solicitor, as ever he had done before. Vol. I. 186, 211.

He was made Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in the time of the Commonwealth. He died in 1673.

GEORGE LORD DIGBY, afterwards EARL of BRISTOL.

He was a man of very extraordinary parts by nature and art, and had surely as good and excellent an education as any man of that age in any country: a graceful and beautiful person, of great eloquence and becomingness in his discourse, (save that sometimes he seemed a little affected,) and of so universal a knowledge, that he never wanted subject for a discourse. He was equal to a very good part in the greatest affairs, but the unfittest man alive to conduct them, having an ambition and vanity superior to all his other parts, and a confidence in himself, which, sometimes intoxicated, transported, and exposed him. He had, from his youth, by the disobligations his family had undergone from the Duke of Buckingham, and the great men who succeeded him, and some sharp reprehension himself had met with, which obliged him to a country life, contracted a prejudice and ill-will to the court; and so had, in the beginning of the parliament, engaged himself with that party which discovered most aversion to it, with a passion and animosity equal to theirs, and, therefore, very acceptable to them. But when he was weary of their violent counsels, and withdrew himself from them, with some circumstances which enough provoked them, and made a reconciliation and mutual confidence in each other for the future manifestly impossible among them, he made private and secret offers of his service to the King, to whom, in so general a defection of his servants, it could not but be very agreeable; and so his Majesty being satisfied, both in the discoveries he made of

what had passed, and in his professions for the future, removed him from the House of Commons, where he had rendered himself marvellously ungracious, and called him by writ to the House of Peers, where he did visibly advance the King's service. Vol. I. 343. He succeeded his father as Earl of Bristol, in 1653, and died in 1676. See the text, Life of Clarendon, Vol. II. p. 397.

WILLIAM LAUD, ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY.

He was a man of great parts, and very exemplary virtues, alloyed and discredited by some unpopular natural infirmities; the greatest of which was, (besides a hasty sharp way of expressing himself,) that he believed innocence of heart, and integrity of manners, was a guard strong enough to secure any man in his voyage through this world, in what company soever he travelled, and through what ways soever he was to pass; and sure never any man was better supplied with that provision. He had great courage and resolution; and being most assured within himself, that he proposed no end in all his actions and designs, but what was pious and just, (as sure no man had ever a heart more entire to the King, the church, or his country,) he never studied the easiest ways to those ends; he thought, it may be, that any art or industry that way would discredit, at least make the integrity of the end suspected, let the cause be what it will. He did court persons too little; nor cared to make his designs and purposes appear as candid as they were, by showing them in any other dress than their own natural beauty, though perhaps in too rough a manner; and did not consider enough what men said, or were like to say of him. If faults and vices were fit to be looked into and discovered, let the persons be who they would that were guilty of them, they were sure to find no connivance or favour from him.

On the death of the Earl of Portland, (1634,) he was made one of the Commissioners of the Treasury and Revenue, which he had reason to be sorry for, because it engaged him in civil business and matters of state, wherein he had little experience, and which he had hitherto avoided.

He defended himself (on his trial) with great and undaunted courage, and less passion than was expected from his constitution, answered all their objections with clearness and irresistible reason, and convinced all impartial men of his integrity, and his detestation of all treasonable intentions. So that, though few excellent men have ever had fewer friends to their persons, yet all reasonable men absolved him from any foul crime that the law could take notice of and punish.

He underwent his execution (10th January 1645) with all Christian courage and magnanimity, to the admiration of the beholders and confusion of his enemies. Vol. I. 90; II. 572.

SIR JOHN COLEPEPPER, CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER.

HE had spent some years of his youth in foreign parts, and especially in armies, where he had seen good service, and very well observed it. He was proud and ambitious, and very much disposed to improve his fortune, which he knew well how to do by industry and thrift, without stooping to any corrupt ways, to which he was not inclined. He did not love the persons of many of those who were the violent managers, (oppositionists,) and less their designs; and, therefore, he no sooner knew that he was well spoken of at court, but he exposed himself to the invitation, and heartily embraced that interest. He had a wonderful insinuation and address into the acceptation and confidence of the King and

Queen, and was not suspected of flattery, when no man more complied with those infirmities they both had; and by that compliance, prevailed often over them.

He was, generally esteemed as a good speaker, being a man of an universal understanding, a quick comprehension, a wonderful memory, who commonly spoke at the end of the debate; when he would recollect all that had been said of weight on all sides with great exactness, and express his own sense with much clearness, and such an application to the House, that no man more gathered a general concurrence to his opinion than he, which was the more notable, because his person and manner of speaking were ungracious enough, so that he prevailed only by the strength of his reason, which was enforced with sufficient confidence. He died in 1660. Vol. I. 340; Life, I. 93.

LUCIUS CAREY, second VISCOUNT FALKLAND, SECRETARY of STATE, killed at the Battle of Newbury, in 1643.

IF the celebrating the memory of eminent and extraordinary persons, and transmitting their great virtues for the imitation of posterity, be one of the principal ends and duties of history, it will not be thought impertinent, in this place, to remember a loss which no time will suffer to be forgotten, and no success of good fortune could repair. In this unhappy battle was slain the Lord Viscount Falkland; a person of such prodigious parts of learning and knowledge, of that inimitable sweetness and delight in conversation, of so flowing and obliging a humanity and goodness to mankind, and of that primitive simplicity and integrity of life, that if there were no other brand upon this odious and accursed civil war than that single loss, it must be most infamous and execrable to all posterity.

Turpe mori, post te, solo non posse dolore.

He was wonderfully beloved by all who knew him, as a man of excellent parts, of a wit so sharp, and a nature so sincere, that nothing could be more lovely.

His house (at Tew) being within little more than ten miles of Oxford, he contracted familiarity and friendship with the most polite and accurate men of that university; who found such an immenseness of wit, and such a solidity of judgment in him, so infinite a fancy, bound in by a most logical ratiocination; such a vast knowledge, that he was not ignorant in any thing; yet such an excessive humility, as if he had known nothing, that they frequently resorted and dwelt with him, as in a college situated in a purer air; so that his house was a university in a less volume, whither they came not so much for repose as study, and to examine and refine those grosser propositions, which laziness and consent made current in vulgar conversation.

He was superior to all those passions and affections which attend vulgar minds, and was guilty of no other ambition than of knowledge, and to be reputed a lover of all good men; and that made him too much a contemner of those arts, which must be indulged in the transactions of human affairs.

Thus fell that incomparable young man, in the four and thirtieth year of his age, having so much dispatched the true business of life, that the oldest rarely attain to that immense knowledge, and the youngest enter not into the world with more innocency: whosoever leads such a life, needs be the less anxious upon how short warning it is taken from him.

His stature was low, and smaller than most men's; his motion not graceful; and his aspect so far from inviting, that it had somewhat in it of simplicity; and his voice the worst of the three, and so untuned, that, instead of recon-

ciling, it offended the ear; but that little person, and small stature, was quickly found to contain a great heart, a courage so keen, and a nature so fearless, that no composition of the strongest limbs ever disposed any man to greater enterprise; and that untuneable body and voice easily discovered itself to be supplied and governed by a mind and understanding so excellent, that the wit and weight of all he said carried greater lustre with it than any ornament of delivery could ensure. Vol. I. 340. II. 350. Life, I. 39.

SIR FRANCIS COTTINGTON, created LORD COTTINGTON; CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER.

HE was a very wise man, by the great and long experience he had in business of all kinds; and by his natural temper, which was not liable to any transport of anger, or any other passion, but could bear contradiction and even reproach, without being moved, or put out of his way: for he was very steady in pursuing what he proposed to himself, and had a courage not to be frighted with any opposition. It is true he was illiterate as to the grammar of any language, or the principles of any science, but by his perfectly understanding the Spanish, (which he spoke as a Spaniard,) the French, and Italian languages, and having read very much in all, he could not be said to be ignorant in any part of learning, divinity only excepted.

He was of an excellent humour, and very easy to live with; and under a grave countenance, covered the most of mirth, and caused more than any man of the most pleasant disposition. He never used any body ill, but used many very well for whom he had no regard: his greatest fault was, that he could dissemble, and make men believe that he loved them very well, when he cared not for them. He had no

very tender affections, nor bowels apt to yearn at all objects which deserved compassion. He was heartily weary of the world, and no man was more willing to die; which is an argument that he had peace of conscience. He left behind him a greater esteem of his parts than love to his person. He died in 1651. Vol. I. 151. III. 382.

OLIVER CROMWELL.

He was one of those men, *quos vituperare ne inimici quidem possunt, nisi ut simul laudent*; whom his very enemies could not condemn without commending him at the same time; for he could never have done half that mischief without great parts of courage, industry, and judgment. He must have had a wonderful understanding in the natures and humours of men, and as great a dexterity in applying them; who, from a private and obscure birth, (though of a good family,) without interest or estate, alliance or friendship, could raise himself to such a height, and compound and knead such opposite and contradictory tempers, humours, and interests into a consistence, that contributed to his designs, and to their own destruction; whilst himself grew insensibly powerful enough to cut off those by whom he had climbed, in the instant that they projected to demolish their own building. What was said of Cinna may very justly be said of him, *Ausum eum quæ nemo auderet bonus; perfecisse, quæ a nullo, nisi fortissimo, perfici possent.* He attempted those things which no good man durst have ventured on; and achieved those in which none but a valiant and great man could have succeeded. Without doubt, no man with more wickedness ever attempted any thing, or brought to pass what he desired more wickedly, more in the face and contempt of religion and moral honesty; yet wick-

edness as great as his could never have accomplished those designs, without the assistance of a great spirit, an admirable circumspection, and sagacity, and a most magnanimous resolution.

When he appeared first in the parliament, he seemed to have a person in no degree gracious, no ornament of discourse, none of those talents which use to conciliate the affections of the stander by: yet, as he grew into place and authority, his parts seemed to be raised, as if he had had concealed faculties, till he had occasion to use them: and when he was to act the part of a great man, he did it without any indecency, notwithstanding the want of custom.

After he was confirmed and invested Protector, he consulted with very few upon any action of importance, nor communicated any enterprise he resolved upon, with more than those who were to have principal parts in the execution of it; nor with them sooner than was absolutely necessary. What he once resolved, in which he was not rash, he would not be dissuaded from, nor endure any contradiction of his power and authority.

Cromwell was not so far a man of blood as to follow Machiavel's method; which prescribes, upon a total alteration of government, as a thing absolutely necessary, to cut off all the heads of those, and extirpate their families, who are friends to the old one. It was confidently reported, that in the council of officers, it was more than once proposed, "That there might be a general massacre of all the royal party, as the only expedient to secure the government," but that Cromwell would never consent to, it may be, out of too great a contempt of his enemies. In a word, as he was guilty of many crimes against which damnation is denounced, and for which hell fire is prepared, so he had some good qualities which have caused the memory of some men in all ages to be celebrated; and he will be looked upon by pos-

terity as a brave wicked man. He died 3d September 1658. Vol. III. 648.

Sir HENRY VANE, the Younger.

He had an unusual aspect, which, though it might naturally proceed both from his father and mother, neither of which were beautiful persons, yet made men think there was something in him extraordinary; and his whole life made good that imagination.

He was indeed a man of extraordinary parts, a pleasant wit, a great understanding, which pierced into and discerned the purposes of other men with wonderful sagacity, whilst he had himself *vultum clausum*, that no man could make a guess of what he intended. He was of a temper not to be moved, of a rare dissimulation, and could comply when it was not seasonable to contradict, without losing ground by the condescension; and if he were not superior to Mr Hampden, he was inferior to no other man in all mysterious artifices. He was executed for high treason in 1662. Vol. I. 186. II. 379.

THOMAS WRIOTHESLEY, fourth Earl of Southampton; Lord Treasurer after the Restoration.

He was indeed a great man in all respects, and brought very much reputation to the King's cause. He had great dislike of the high courses which had been taken in the government, and a particular prejudice to the Earl of Strafford, for some exorbitant proceedings. But as soon as he saw the ways of reverence and duty towards the King declined, and the prosecution of the Earl of Strafford to exceed the limits

of justice, he opposed them vigorously in all their proceedings. He was a man of great sharpness of judgment, a very quick apprehension, and that readiness of expression upon any sudden debate, that no man delivered himself more advantageously and weightily, and more efficaciously with the hearers; so that no man gave them more trouble in his exposition, or drew so many to a concurrence with him in opinion. He had no relation to, or dependence upon, the court, or purpose to have any, but wholly pursued the public interest.

He was not only an exact observer of justice, but so clear-sighted a discerner of all the circumstances which might disguise it, that no false or fraudulent colour could impose upon him; and of so sincere and impartial a judgment, that no prejudice to the person of any man made him less awake to his cause; but believed that there is *aliquid et in hostem nefas*, and that a very ill man might be very unjustly dealt with. On the happy return of his Majesty, he seemed to recover great vigour of mind, and undertook the charge of High Treasurer with much alacrity and industry, as long as he had any hope to get a revenue settled proportionable to the expence of the crown, (towards which his interest, and authority, and counsel, contributed very much,) or to reduce the expence of the court within the limits of the revenue. His person was of a small stature; his courage, and all his other faculties, very great; having no sign of fear, or sense of danger, when he was in a place where he ought to be found. He died in 1667. Vol. II. 200, Life, III. 781.

LENTHAL

Is represented by Clarendon as a very unfit man for the place of Speaker; but he was deficient neither in good

sense or presence of mind, if we may judge from the following anecdote: When the King went into the House of Commons (1642) to demand the five members, he asked the Speaker, who stood below, whether any of them were in the house? The Speaker, falling on his knee, prudently replied, "I have, Sir, neither eyes to see, nor tongue to speak in this place, but as the house is pleased to direct me, whose servant I am; and I humbly ask pardon, that I cannot give any other answer to what your Majesty is pleased to demand of me."—*Hume.*

END OF VOLUME SECOND.

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